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The story of the Christian
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The Story of the Christian Centuries

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The Story of the Christian Centuries

PERSONAL AND INTRODUCTORY

The controlling purpose of this book is to give an interesting and connected account of the great movements by which *Christian civilization* has been developed. Many intelligent people have a vague notion of the course of things. They are familiar with conspicuous names, they are well read as to isolated events, they are not unacquainted with certain important dates and statistics, but there are such breaks in the chain of their facts that they do not hold together. They have lost the sequences of even the most stupendous occurrences. But in connection with confessed distrust concerning their fragmentary knowledge there is often a warmly expressed desire to possess a consistent account of the amazing conquest of the world by Christianity.

There is, of course, no way of making the study of Human History easy; for the mastery of any science depends upon the application of the mental powers with energy and patience. But if one has at the outset an assurance of satisfactory results; of a life-long enrichment of the mind; and of the acquirement of facility in the study of such individuals and events as are constantly being encountered in general literature, there should be sufficient impulse for a manful attempt to develop a historical imagination, and to gain a rational idea of the general lines of progress by which mankind has made advancement. This assurance is confidently held out to those who will begin where Christian history begins, and follow the story of the Christian centuries. Many are kept from wrestling with the mighty problems involved because they are lost in the multitude and apparent confusion of names and dates when they attempt special studies, but they may be encouraged to know that there is a traceable line of development. There has been an ascent of man. There has been unbroken advancement from the first, and if its story can be brought within a moderate compass and can be made logically progressive and complete; if great issues can

be presented as the romance of a race, and great leaders fairly portrayed, men will be inspired to historical study. I have attempted, therefore, to make it all read like a story that moves right on from point to point, hoping thus to secure interest in a marvelous tale, and at the same time to outline the great movements of history.

In dividing the Christian centuries into Eight Periods I have not taken an accidental or arbitrary number, but have found that a comprehensive course most naturally and simply breaks up into this number of sections. If the study were to be pursued at greater length each period would be readily subdivided; but in passing as lightly as possible over details and minor incidents one almost inevitably strikes into these great divisions or cycles, each of which is nearly on a parity with the others in point of significance.

It is needless to say that no attempt has been made to contribute to the scholarship of the world, in the way of original research; and yet the hope is indulged that the treatment will not be found to be unscholarly. There has been faithful study of many different historians and philosophical writers, and it is fair to say that no facts are

given without a judicial sifting of evidence, and no opinions expressed which have not resulted from a careful weighing of the problems presented.

Any student of history in this decade is fortunate in the inheritance of much broad and philosophical thinking on the course of human development. The old "drum and fife" histories, which dealt with campaigns and diplomacies, have been supplanted by a very different class of productions. It has at length come to be recognized that the real forces are mental and spiritual, and that revolutions have been delayed or hastened by the prevalence of ideas and sentiments among whole peoples. Guizot was a student of spiritual causes, as is seen in his history in which is set forth the genius and growth of the French people. John Richard Green delighted to trace the underlying forces that shaped the English nation. Hallam was a philosophical student of history, as also was Mr. Froude. All of these historians may have failed of accuracy and sometimes even of justness, but their methods and purposes have been true and productive.

I have not often attempted to quote authorities; but it affords me peculiar satisfaction to acknowledge my great indebted-

ness to Prof. George P. Fisher, who combines all of the qualities of a really great historian; being at once patient in scholarship, conspicuously fair in judgment, broad in sympathies, and virile in his treatment of moral issues.

As already indicated, I have had in mind not a history of the *Church*; that is, not a history marking the development of an institution, much less of an organization; but the rise of that interesting and comprehensive *civilization* which has the Church for its organizing center, and which includes all the elements of human society at its best. No such study, however brief and fragmentary, would rightly approach the theme which did not involve "the divine idea that the New Kingdom should not extirpate, but ennoble, the normal activities of human nature, and appropriate whatever is genuine and of durable worth in the culture and civilization of the race." To those words of Professor Fisher, I will only add these from Bishop Brooks: "All the world's history is ecclesiastical history, is the story of the success and failure, the advance and hindrance of the ideal humanity,—the Church of the living God."

CHAPTER I

THE APOSTOLIC PERIOD

The study of the rise and progress of Christian civilization properly begins with a glance at the condition of the world at the advent of Christ. For no institution, no form of government, no type of social life, is built without a foundation. The basis for Christianity was deeply laid in the fruitful centuries of Jewish nationality and in the outworkings of thought and life under ancient civilizations. The Apostolic Period, included within the limits of this chapter, covers only the handful of years between 30 A. D. and the close of the first century; and is sharply bounded by the public ministry of Christ and the death of the last Apostles. A brief review of the antecedents of the new religion will, however, be necessary to gain a mastery of the situation, and to give a clear understanding of the work which needed to be done, and of the forces by which it was to be accomplished.

In the Jewish world we shall find a church which for many generations had existence

without formal organization, and then, for a much longer period, persisted in part because of the completeness and elaborateness of its ecclesiastical structure. In the Patriarchal Age the Church was pre-eminently a family affair. It was institutional only so far as the family and the retinue of servants accepted the religious leadership of the father and master. It does not appear that there was any priestly function performed by this unmitred head, and yet the very life of religion, the trust and the worship of a covenant God, was in the keeping of such men of faith and fidelity as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

As the life of the church passed into the Mosaic dispensation it underwent a distinct modification. The family became a nation, and religious provision was made for a whole people. Hence the elaborate code, or perhaps codes, of authority, prescribing modes of correct living in the home, in the tribe, and in the nation; and the elaboration of a scheme for worship, and for the establishment of a proper priesthood.

After this came the Davidic Period, when the kingdom was focused in a political and religious capital; when a distinct advance had been made in general culture; when a

rich liturgy was growing into use in connection with an impressive Temple service, and the increasing influence of the priesthood. This period passed insensibly into that of the Prophets, who were both teachers and reformers; and who watched with spiritual solicitude the habits and devotions of the people, and greatly enriched the literature of the Church through all the ages to come by their contributions to religious thought in the name of a God of holiness and truth.

The next phase of the Jewish Church is widely separated in time and in essential characteristics. Some centuries have passed since the last prophetic deliverance, and many events of moment have modified the life of this religious people. The years of captivity have come and gone. The mass of the Chosen People are widely scattered, and over the nation which still centers in Jerusalem is the controlling hand of the Roman government. The political power is gone; but with liberty of internal life undisturbed the upper ranks of the Jews are sharply divided by the boundaries of sects which have already become traditional and persistent. The Pharisees, originally the Puritans of the race, are now largely formalists; the Sadducees are a select body distin-

guished by culture and skepticism; the Herodians are the court party and adherents of the reigning family; the Essenes, who are much less numerous and influential, represent tendencies which have been persistent in the Church toward asceticism; the mass of the people are not formally identified with any party.

Perhaps more important than this classification of the leading families was the institution of the Synagogue, which had been developed in the land of captivity and brought back to flourish by the side of the Temple, and more widely and more intimately to touch the minds of the people by its simpler service. The Synagogue belonged in part to the formal Church, declaring itself by observable methods of worship; but within the Church and within the Temple also, it was an inner church in which was the real vitality of the old religion and the hope of the new. As the outgrowth of many centuries and great experiences, there arose in Palestine in Christ's day a type of character not elsewhere known on earth, but clearly defined in the few choice men and women who have been made to live through the Gospel narratives. Zacharias, the priest of holiness, Simeon and Anna aged saints

of the Temple, Elizabeth and Mary, kinsfolk according to the flesh and also according to the spirit, are representatives of that inner circle, untouched by formalism and hypocrisy, but deeply moved upon by the Spirit and truth of Jehovah, upon whose covenant promise they waited.

Because Judea was "the hearthstone of the whole Jewish race," and because the Temple was the meeting-place of multitudes during the great festival seasons, vast numbers of these widely-scattered peoples of the old faith came in contact with the religion which stirred the Holy City on a notable Day of Pentecost. It is necessary, therefore, to take into account the multitudes from all parts of the world's wide empire who were converted to Christianity. St. Peter sent his noble epistle to "the Sojourners of the Dispersion," that is, to the body of Jewish Christians scattered all the way from Pontus and Alexandria to the confines of the Parthians and Medes, eastward, and to Rome and the cities of Gaul, westward. The political unity of the Jewish people was gone, but the bands of race and religion held them closer than ever. They had maintained the faith of Israel, protesting against the superstitions and abominations of the Gentiles; now they

furnished "great companies" of believers to the new churches of missionary origin. From this people, whose religious history was a prelude to the story of Christianity, and whose worship betokened the purer type of the later Church, we turn to the churchless world of the Gentiles. Here corruption was deeper and darker, and unpreparedness for the Kingdom much more marked. Their own religions had not led even a "saving remnant" to wait with longing and hope for the Lord's coming, while the Jewish faith had touched lightly indeed the philosophy and the worship of other nations. Judaism was never aggressive. In the early centuries the comparative freedom of the Jews from idolatry had been gained only by seclusion from Gentile peoples. Even after their own monotheism had become impregnable they lacked the enthusiasm for conquest and the devotion for missionary service. The idolatrous nations, left to themselves, drifted into an extreme of superstition on the one hand, and of skepticism on the other, that left them "without God and without hope in the world," and subject to the wickedness which in inconceivably gross forms had run riot through the earth. It would appear from this, at first glance, that nothing had

been accomplished through the centuries, outside of the Chosen People, as a preparation for the work of Christianity. Broader and deeper considerations, however, show that even these outside lands were to a certain extent prepared for the advent of Christ, and that contributions had been made of large value to the enrichment of all mankind and to the furtherance of the Gospel.

In two positive ways great advancement toward the possible establishment of Christianity was manifest. First, the extension of the Roman Empire had brought the most diverse peoples into bonds of unity. Before the close of the first century the rule of the Cæsars reached from Britain and Spain on the seaboard to regions beyond the Euphrates, and from provinces beyond the Danube on the north to the desert of Africa on the south. All this served to further the spread of Christianity by breaking down "the barriers of national and race antipathy." Besides establishing order and furnishing protection to life this sway of a single government tended constantly to evoke a feeling of unity and mutual interest. Again, the spread of Greek culture and speech quickened human minds for the apprehension of the new truth. Delays had been many and

long, but now the kingdom was destined to move swiftly to conquest. The way was providentially prepared by the intellectual development of the remarkable people occupying the Grecian Peninsula; and by their gift of art, philosophy, science and literature to many other nations. The conquests of Alexander in the East had been speedily followed by the adoption of the Greek language, and cities of culture had become new centers of influence for the cultivation of Hellenic thought and sentiment.

On the negative side, also, there was preparation for the religion of faith and purity. On the one hand the old mythologies had ceased to command the assent of men. Priests could scarcely conceal their amusement at the absurdities of the sacrifices which were still performed, and which were impressive only to the few. On the other hand religion and philosophy as known to the ancients had utterly failed to mold noble characters, or to build a society of stable qualities. Indeed, the state of morals was so low that observant men fell into despair in contemplating the prevailing baseness and wretchedness. Licentiousness and cruelty had become characteristic, and the old religion tended to inflame rather than to

quench the mad passions of her devotees. Men seemed to have reached the very climax of wickedness with no saving force in view.

As Dean Farrar has said: "The epoch which witnessed the early growth of Christianity was an epoch of which the horror and degradation have rarely been equaled, and perhaps never excelled, in the annals of mankind. Were we to form our sole estimate of it from the livid picture of its wickedness, which St. Paul has painted with powerful strokes, we might suppose that we were judging from too lofty a standpoint." But it is not Paul alone who puts a "terrible brand upon the pride of Heathenism, for there are abundant proofs of the abnormal wickedness which accompanied the decadence of the ancient civilization." It was an age of "enormous wealth, of unbounded self-indulgence, of coarse and tasteless luxury, of hopeless fatalism, of unspeakable sadness and weariness."

Out of the very hopelessness of the prevailing conditions had sprung up a sort of blind hope. There were no lower deeps of misery and degradation into which humanity could plunge. Either the race had run its course or redemptive forces were to appear from some unknown quarter. Either human

society was a failure and all things had been brought into hopeless confusion, or the gods would interfere for rescue. Thus it was that a certain expectancy of a crisis and a change was, perhaps unconsciously, finding place in men's minds and preparing them to accept the startling announcements of the Gospel.

The foundation for the final and universal religion of earth was laid in an incredibly brief period of activity. The public ministry of Jesus of Nazareth covered scarcely more than three years. For thirty years he was hidden away in an obscure village of Galilee. Suddenly he came forth from this retreat and took up the work which John the Baptist, as his forerunner, had begun by arousing the people of Judea to an unwonted religious zeal. The Christ manifested himself in manifold ministrations of grace and power, preaching in Jerusalem and in the cities and fields of Galilee, opening to men new conceptions of the Father and of their own divine sonship, establishing a perfect standard for moral and spiritual character, showing kindness and compassion by word and deed, sealing his devotion to the recovery of mankind by submission to the martyrdom of the cross, and demonstrating his transcendent authority and might, by con-

quering death and appearing to the disciples "under circumstances that dispelled the doubts of the most incredulous man among them as to the reality of his resurrection."

It was but three years since a handful of men, chiefly from the lower walks of life, had been called to the companionship and instruction of the Man of Galilee; but during that brief period they had become imbued with his spirit, animated by his views of the Kingdom of God, and established in the sublime faith that the earth had at last found its Redeemer. They met together for some days in a room in the city of Jerusalem, "about a hundred and twenty" in all, cherishing sacred memories and waiting for the promised power of the Spirit. They were for the time apart from the world; and were probably lost sight of by those who had pursued their Master with murderous malignity.

The Day of Pentecost, with the usual gathering at Jerusalem of vast numbers of Jewish peoples from every quarter of the earth, had now come. It lay within the divine plan to make this the baptismal-day of the Christian Church. It became evident to the little company of disciples, chastened by sorrow and ripened by prayer, that this was the opportunity for public announce-

ment of great facts of which they had been eye-witnesses. At the first stir, word of what was transpiring ran like wildfire, and multitudes were brought together to hear the first Christian preacher, who, filled with the Holy Ghost, was proclaiming with unexampled boldness the testimony of God as given through Jesus of Nazareth and calling men to repentance and faith. Minds already rendered alert by the previous teachings of Christ and by the happenings of recent days gave ready attention, and before nightfall "about three thousand souls" were baptized in the faith and loyalty of true discipleship, and a new organization was formed which is yet to make complete its beneficent conquest of the world.

The extension of Christianity from Jerusalem and Judea to the regions beyond was accomplished in two ways. It was brought about immediately and naturally by the dispersion of the Christians, who carried with them the thrilling story of the cross and of the new faith. Many went back from the scenes of Pentecost to gladden their homes with a new message, and with uplifted lives; and many others were scattered abroad by the persecutions which assailed the infant Church. The very effort which designing

men had made to complete the work of stamping out the new faith which they had supposed successfully accomplished on the night of the crucifixion, was one of the means used in the ordering of Providence for rapidly spreading the good news. The advance of the Kingdom was also steadily pushed by the disciples who within a few weeks had been transformed into Apostles of the Christian faith. Almost immediately they had been called to Samaria, a half-way foreign section, to assist an Evangelist who had begun work at the ancient capital of Israel. A little later, at Joppa, Peter had a vision of the world-wide scope of the Gospel; and at about the same time Saul of Tarsus received and accepted a summons to lay down his opposition to the Nazarene and take up in place of it a commission to preach among the Gentiles the saving grace of God.

There is nothing on record more providential than the conversion of Paul. He was not absolutely indispensable to the cause of humanity, only the Christ is that; and yet it is well-nigh impossible to think of the early triumphs of the Gospel apart from the services of this man. His gifts by inheritance and early training were all in

the direction of an apostolic equipment; and when by a radical conversion the very foundations of his character were laid in that of his Master he became at once his chosen messenger. He put aside every other ambition and became a man with one master-passion. With limitless energy and unflinching zeal he pushed forward the work. No dangers daunted him, no obstacles checked his enthusiasm, no labors exhausted his devotion, no disappointments clouded his faith. For him to live was Christ.

It is hardly fair to say that the other apostles were not abundant in labors, even if they fell behind the great missionary to the Gentiles. The apostle John continued through prosecutions and manifold changes to illustrate in the region about Ephesus the love and spirituality of his Master. St. Peter became, by the discipline of years, a saint indeed, and labored by the special "call" of his taste and aptitudes among his countrymen in the east around Babylon. There seems to be substantial truth in the traditions which assign the sphere of Andrew's preaching to Scythia; that of Thomas to Parthia and India; and that of Mark to Alexandria.

Whatever may have been the details of

apostolic services, there is no doubt whatever touching the general fact of the extension of the Kingdom during the first fruitful century of Christianity. It traversed the length and breadth of the empire, from the Pillars of Hercules to the banks of the Indus. A chain of great cities was held fast for a new doctrine, and strong churches were planted in them, which became centers of missionary activities. Before the last of the apostles had passed away the new religion was powerfully organized in Jerusalem, in Antioch and Ephesus on the Asiatic shore; and in Philippi, Corinth and Rome on the continent of Europe, while in scores of smaller towns churches were formed and active enterprises set on foot.

This was an amazing accomplishment in the face of a corrupt and indifferent heathenism, and of a stubborn and malignant Judaism. But the significance of the achievement is not to be measured by the statistics of converts or even of devoted workers. The Kingdom cometh not by observation. There was little at this period to challenge the attention, much less to awaken the apprehensions of the political leaders of the Empire. If every item of outward progress had been detailed to a

Roman official he would have yawned over the tedious recital and scoffed at any predictions of the ultimate conquest of the earth. The multitudes still adhered to the heathen religions. Nevertheless the larger fact remains,—as we now see it in retrospect,—that Christianity had won a place in the Empire, that it had secured a vantage ground from which the complete conquest was surely to be made. Certain forces had begun to operate which were rapidly becoming irresistible.

It may be a matter of historical interest to make mention of a half-dozen significant gains which at the close of the first century stood to the credit of the new religion. In the first place, the Church had become organized. Compared with the complete institution of to-day it was exceedingly simple, and to the minds of many may seem to have lacked both impressiveness and effectiveness. Each community of Christians found a sufficient basis for worship and mutual helpfulness in the growing sense of brotherhood. Without elaborate organization each "company of believers" became a composite body; while between the different churches communications were constantly passing in a way to emphasize the

larger unity of all Christians. At first there had been merely a great unorganized company of converts at Jerusalem, with smaller groups in outlying towns and cities. Gradually a scheme of organization was devised and put into practice, partly under the personal supervision of the apostles and partly in adaptation to circumstances and exigencies. The historical book of "The Acts of the Apostles," and also the Epistles, are almost barren of suggestion as to the details of ecclesiastical structure, the Church having evidently been left to adapt itself to the demands of each land and age. With this liberty, but with the necessity upon it of maintaining vigorous life and aggressive activities, it finally built itself up as a vital organism in the midst of human society.

In connection with its orderly life Christianity established the institution of Lord's Day worship. It is apparent from Paul's letters that during his day the question of Sabbath observance was not settled beyond dispute. "One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let each man be fully assured in his own mind," he had written to the Romans. But by the end of the century the Jewish Christians had yielded their traditional

regard for the Seventh Day, while the Gentile converts were being educated to the loving observance of the first day of the week; and the consecration of a memorial day to the Risen Saviour had become characteristic of the Christian Church.

Another distinct gain, and one of a value too great to be measured, is discovered in the higher standard of character and conduct which had become established in society. In nothing was the Church more in contrast with the heathen order of things. Shameless disregard for pure sentiments, for manly honor and womanly virtue, had distinguished the civilization which was being displaced. Now came about in every Christian community a reformation of morals which presented a new type of personal character and of family life. The regeneration of society was shown to be a possibility and new ideas and forces were actively at work to bring this about.

Christianity, in its adjustment to social conditions had taken another long step toward universal dominion. The policy by which alone it could have enjoyed continuous and productive life through the ages, was established during the first century. If only an ideal condition of things could be tolerated,

then the new religion must have fallen at the first conflict with ancient institutions. These could not at once be either abolished or reformed. Under the example of the Master and the wise instruction of the apostles, Christianity became tolerant, patient, adaptable; leaving time to eliminate wrongs and injustices, and to bring about a more equitable legislation and nobler customs. It was a complex and difficult task which the new religion assumed,—to actually regenerate the world, to modify social relations and to shape governments in the interest of fairness and kindness. Only the policy established in the apostolic period could have made the undertaking a hopeful one. By it even slaves of heathen masters were taught to “adorn the doctrine of Christ” by lives of patient faithfulness, and the subjects of usurping kings were urged to obedience and loyalty, in the interest of peace and good order.

It is too great a thing to be passed over,—that Christianity had already firmly established in the world the active principle of benevolence. The old world knew no charity. The Jews had their tithing and free-will offerings, but these were mainly devoted to the support of their Temple

service, and their charity never went beyond the limits of their own nationality. Among the most cultivated people of heathendom, the sentiment of benevolence was unfelt and its practice unknown. With the introduction of Christianity came a new conception of the mission of man and a new spirit to animate him. During the earliest weeks at Jerusalem after the Pentecostal outpouring a wave of generosity and brotherliness swept over the young Church. It was the spirit of love which was born never to die. The apostles urged upon Paul as he set forth on his missionary journey that which he was himself zealous to do, namely, to "remember the poor." Everywhere his converts responded to his appeals for brotherly help, and before the first generation of Christians had passed away it had become a matter of course to send even across the sea contributions from the favored to the unfortunate. Nothing is more vital to Christianity than the spirit of charity, and certainly nothing is more closely associated with the redemption of the world. And the fact is significant that the foundation for the present world-wide philanthropy was laid far back in the apostolic century.

One other achievement of lasting value

belonging to this earliest period was the accumulation of a body of sacred literature. We have become accustomed to our completed Bible, but when Paul began his missionary journeys the world had a collection of inspired Scriptures no larger than during the reign of the Maccabees. Christ had given the people no writings, and had apparently laid no injunctions upon any man to put into permanent form the story of his life and the record of his teachings. The whole matter was left to take care of itself. It seems a terrible risk to have taken, but by the end of the century the work had been accomplished. By that time the aged and spiritually-minded St. John had written his last message of love, while behind it lay in succession the Gospel memoirs, and the apostolic letters which special circumstances had called forth during forty years of intense activity in widely separated fields of Christian labor. These writings, produced in answer to immediate wants and unforeseen emergencies, were certainly the fruitage of the Spirit's influence upon minds already soundly Christian; and the response of the Church to these records and revelations is as profound and tender to-day as when they were compiled in that early century.

To sum up the achievements of the apostolic period we may say that the work of redemption was then well begun. The seed was planted; foundations were laid; organization was being perfected; vital forces had been set in operation. The end could not be doubtful in view of the prevailing power of truth, the vitality of righteousness, the irresistible might of love. Problems were still untouched, numberless difficulties were still in the way, opposition was to prove almost endless, yet the Kingdom had come, and a new day had already begun to dawn.

CHAPTER II

CENTURIES OF PERSECUTION

The second period in the development of Christianity is sharply defined. It extends from the death of the last apostle to the conversion of the Emperor Constantine and the consequent change in the relation of the new religion to the state. The Church entered upon this period without the personal guidance and inspiration of those who had been immediately associated with its Founder. As the Twelve had been left alone in the world upon the ascension of their Master, so now the great body of disciples constituting the Church and representing Christ in the world was left without an authoritative source of personal appeal. With multiplying problems of thought and action; with an expanding field and an intensified opposition, the young church increasingly asserted itself as a regenerating force in human society. The first stage had been successfully passed, and the second was opening with the promise born of achievements already remarkable. It was

only three-quarters of a century since the close of Christ's ministry, but the Word had been proclaimed in many lands to vast multitudes; the great centers of the Empire were already held by strong churches, and the new ideas were silently molding the sentiments of men. At the beginning of this period Christianity had scarcely attracted the attention of the Roman officials as a separate religion. During the progress of two centuries it was set upon by the forces of the government under the aroused animosity of emperors and people. At the close of that period it was established as the religion of the Empire.

It will be worth while, first of all, to note more exactly the extent of Christianity, and the points of vantage it had gained in the great campaign which it was conducting during this period.

At the end of the third century the Church was not further removed in time from the days of apostolic labor than we, at the beginning of the twentieth century, are from the settlements of the English in Massachusetts Bay, and of the Dutch along the Hudson. By that time there was a flourishing church at Edessa in the heart of the Mesopotamian valley, counting the king in its

membership. Beyond this region eastward the Gospel had been effectively preached in Persia, Media, Parthia, and Bactria, certainly in Arabia, and possibly in India. Along the then populous northern shore of Africa was a chain of strong churches, beginning at Alexandria on the Nile and extending through Cyrene to Carthage, which was in religious matters, as long before in commerce and arms, a rival of Rome. At Lyons there was a vigorous church, whose leaders were influencing the thought of Christendom. Other points in Gaul had also been occupied. There were likewise outposts of Christianity in Germany west of the Rhine, with probably a foothold gained in Britain. The three great rivers along the northern boundaries of the Empire, the Thames, the Rhine and the Danube, were touched by the streams of Christian influence while the shores of the "Great Sea" (The Mediterranean) nowhere failed to respond to the appeals of the new religion.

It is impossible to calculate with even approximate accuracy the numbers of actual adherents of the church in the various lands; nor would it, indeed, profit greatly to have full statistics of communicants and support-

ers. The mere rehearsal of figures gained from missionary reports to-day from India and Japan gives but faint indication of the power and promise of Christianity in those countries. So was it in the Roman Empire at the close of the third century. In an outward way a successful policy had been pursued since the days of St. Paul's wise enterprise; the Christian forces were massed in cities. Christianity held the centers of wide-reaching influence. Antioch was the seat of an immense church, estimated at fifty thousand. Alexandria had been almost entirely captured by the new faith; Rome and Carthage were bulwarks for Christianity against pagan attack; and so the story runs throughout the Empire.

Moreover, the new religion presented an unbroken front against the divided forces of the enemy. The heathen had many gods and many cults, so that there could be no effective combination of religious forces as opposed to the united adherents of the cause of Christ, and the faith of the one God. Furthermore, there was in Christianity inherent truth and spiritual power. Within the visible organization were unseen forces which the world could not estimate; but with which it had finally to reckon.

Looking back upon the status of Christianity in the light of this measurement of its advantages it is easy to say, "It could not have failed to conquer the world"; and yet in our historical study we must take into account the tremendous problem which it was compelled to face all through these early, experimental centuries. The vastness and complexity of the undertaking is understood when it is declared to have been nothing less than the control of the whole of human life. Not that this was distinctly aimed at by the leaders at the outset. They thought only to make converts and gather them into the churches; they thought to withstand the attacks of hostile classes and to build up the new organization. But the real work which Christianity had to do was deeper, broader and more varied. It set out to be a universal religion, but to become that it must dominate the whole of life—in the individual, in the family, in society, in government, and in the current thoughts and sentiments of men.

See how much that meant in the second century. The man who was a slave to sensuality must gain purity and self-control; the man who was cruel and heartless must become gentle and sympathetic; the man who

was untouched by moral claims must become conscientious; the man who was crooked in his dealings must become fair and honest. Yet even so great a task was successfully undertaken. Of course, faults which to-day would be inexcusable — especially those looking toward vanity or coarseness—were not uncommon; and yet the defenders of Christianity could point to a change in the type of personal character under the influence of the new religion which amounted to a moral revolution. So far as social life was concerned two tendencies had to be steadfastly resisted; the one being the tendency toward seclusion from the world, the other being the tendency toward concession to prevailing customs. It was not so simple a matter to adjust a pure religion to the multifarious demands of pagan society, and yet this is what Christianity actually succeeded in doing. It neither shut itself into a cloistered life, nor did it lose character through accommodation to an evil world. In the retrospect it seems an amazing accomplishment. At the outset everything was tainted with corruption. The old religion was full of superstitions, empty forms, and degrading ceremonies; business was often connected with the traffic fostered by idol-

atry and magic; amusements were cruel or base.

How could Christianity live in the midst of a social life honeycombed with vice? How maintain the family when a part remained heathen? How conduct business or pursue trade in dealing chiefly with pagans? How share in a government which was administered in connection with superstitious rites? How could a standard radically new be introduced and maintained in the daily friction and unavoidable conflict with ancient prejudices and habits? All of the old could not be abrogated or abolished without destroying the very bonds of society with its institutions and activities. It must needs assimilate much of the old life, transforming it gradually by the new spirit and the higher moral standards. It must infuse new ideas and sentiments which in time would modify the very structure of society.

To accomplish this Christianity had two revolutionary forces at command—the new idea of God and the new idea of man. The ancient conception of Deity was either ineffective or debasing; but Christianity gave men the idea of a Supreme Being to be worshiped with profound reverence; to be loved for his boundless grace; to be trusted for

his goodness and wisdom; and to be approached in spiritual and personal fellowship. The ancient conception of man either ignored the individual as contemptible or incorporated him into the state for which he was supposed to exist; but Christianity presented him in his dignity as made in the image of God, and in his worth as redeemed by a loving Saviour. The practical bearing of these ideas upon the inner consciousness and the outward activities of men was immediate. Society turned from the debasing superstitions of the past and from "the tumult of sensual pleasures to which the world was devoted," and before three centuries had passed there was presented a new phase of life and a new promise of development toward good will, refinement, and noble enterprise.

By the side of the changes which were brought about in the social and political world were others which pertained to the Church. At first its structure was exceedingly simple and flexible. As the centuries went by it became more highly organized and more firmly set in its forms of administration, through changes which may be traced in successive periods. The development of a formal and elaborate system of

church government is not to be identified with the advance of Christianity. Nevertheless it presents an important phase of the progressive life of the new religion.

It all came about in the most natural, one might say inevitable, way. For the sake of interior development and outward extension the church was compelled to take on a more and more elaborate organization. It followed the universal rule of life, the prevailing mode of evolution, which is from simplicity to complexity. The details of the process, as in so many other instances, are lost. The first half of this period was apparently not a literary age, and small care seems to have been given to preservation of such records as were made. Undoubtedly, there were two demands for a more perfect organization of Christians in the then common life. On the one hand each individual church would naturally find in the increase of membership, and in its multiplied relations to society, need of officers and committees; and, on the other hand, the various churches would naturally come into correspondence with one another for mutual interest, and this would call for the appointment of officials of a wide range of authority. In this process of specialization the clergy

became a distinct class set apart from the laity; then from among the clergy certain ones were selected for superintendence of a group of churches. In this way the simple presbyter of the apostolic church became a bishop with the oversight perhaps of a province. Then to the metropolitan bishops was conceded more of influence and authority than to those of the country districts. The influence of prevailing methods of civil governments, together with individual ambitions for official recognition, brought about the evolution of the archbishop. Finally the archbishops at a few great centers, like Antioch, Alexandria and Rome, became primates or patriarchs.

Before the second century closed great gatherings began to be held for the consideration of practical questions affecting the churches everywhere, and there was an inevitable demand for leadership; so the ecclesiastical spirit found development, and the way was opened for the ascendancy of the few, and finally of the one. The Epistle of Clement 96 A. D. has not a word about the bishop of Rome. The Epistles of Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, 140 A. D., insist with tedious iteration on the necessity of order in the churches, to be secured by

obeying their own bishops. It was not until about 170 A. D. that record was made of the notion that St. Peter was the founder of the church at Rome. Once accepted however, the fact was magnified into importance and dogmatic significance. The claim was maintained that the primacy of Peter among the disciples established that of his successor among the churches. Thus was secured supreme authority for the Bishop of Rome.

Together with these hierarchical tendencies were others of a ritualistic character. At first the worship of the Lord's Day had been exceedingly simple and spontaneous. From the Epistle of Clement and the Teaching of the Apostles, written about the year 100, we learn that forms of prayer were coming into use, first in connection with the Lord's Supper and later as embodied in liturgies which were committed to memory. The simple confession of faith made at the baptism of a convert was at this time expanded into what is now known as the Apostles' Creed, the legend of its composition arising somewhat later. Gradually the sermon became developed into a necessary part of the service, partly as an outgrowth of the exhortation accompanying the Scripture reading, and partly an adaptation of the homily of

Grecian philosophers. During this period the Christian Festivals were established, some of them doubtless taking the place of certain heathen celebrations. Easter was the earliest in observance. Epiphany, commemorating the visit of the magi, was adopted first in the eastern and later in the western Church to symbolize the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. Christmas, which was celebrated at the winter solstice, came to be generally observed as the anniversary of the birth of the Founder of Christianity.

It is interesting to see how in connection with this elaboration of the service of the Church came about the use of consecrated edifices. For the first two centuries almost no special buildings were used; and hence there is scarcely a reference in early literature to the sacredness of the places of worship. It was the custom to secure rooms and halls for gatherings, small or great as the case might be, like the "upper room" where Christ held fellowship and conference with his disciples. Very general use was made of the Basilica which was common in the West. It was the offspring of the Roman civilization and served a purpose not unlike that of our Town-hall or Exchange, a

place of public resort and official transactions. It contained a broad central aisle for the chance crowd, and two side aisles, with inner rows of columns; one for the male and one for the female appellants. At the end, which was semi-circular in form, was a platform or "tribunal" for the judge. It came into general adoption by the churches partly because it was to be found in all the centers of population and partly because it was adapted to early habits of assemblage in separating the sexes and in furnishing a special place for the clergy and the singers. In a general way, too, it gave expression to the popular life favored by Christianity, in contrast with the exclusiveness of both the Jewish and the Pagan temples. Thus the Basilica gradually became associated with established forms of worship; the solemn beauty of the Gothic cathedral being the expression of the worship of a much later time.

To this period belongs the development of two great heresies, one of which plagued the churches for several centuries. The first of these is covered by the general term Gnosticism, the other being known as Ebionism. The Founder of Christianity had declared that it must needs be that offences come. And come they did in

many an obstacle which the new religion had to surmount, and in a menacing form they came in these two great schemes of thought which arising from a vigorous and self-asserting intellectualism sought to either absorb or overthrow Christianity. Indeed there were three distinct sources of religious philosophy with which Christianity was compelled to have a reckoning in the early centuries. One was characteristically oriental, the second was Grecian, and the third a composite of Hellenism and Judaism, developed in the school of Alexandria.

The genius of Gnosticism was pride of knowledge, and the boast of its devotee was that in the profundity and breadth of his thinking he held the solution of all the problems of the universe including that of the redemption of mankind. The germ of this self exalting Gnosticism appeared in the Church as early as the time when St. Paul wrote to the Colossians warning them against a "show of wisdom" which lay in philosophy and vain deceit, and which was really "after the traditions of men and the rudiments of the world." It developed into various schools which need not here be described; but in a general way it may be said to have been given to fanciful speculations

both Pantheistic and Dualistic. It patronized Christianity as a source of knowledge, but treated the writings of the New Testament in the most captious and arbitrary fashion. Its advocates held that Christ was a mere man, but was at the same time the mask for a higher being, the heavenly Christ, who acted through him. They accepted the idea of redemption which they found suggested in the Gospels, but made it consist in the liberation of the psychical nature from the entanglement of matter, which they looked upon as essentially evil.

That branch of the Gnostic school known as Manichæism, to which Augustine belonged before his conversion, was perhaps the most prominent and persistent. There was in it only the slightest infusion of Christianity. Its adherents held that the universe was divided into the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness; that in human nature these two elements are mingled by the evil work of Satan; and that the spirits of light who work for the redemption of the world have their abode in the sun. The sect was thoroughly organized. It spread throughout the East and into the Western Empire, and lingered on into the middle ages.

The Ebionites probably had their origin in a company of Jewish Christians who were first gathered in a town east of the Jordan. Their name, which signifies "the poor," may have been given them in contempt for their condition, or it may have been self-assumed to show their acceptance of the supposed standard of Christianity in the primitive Church. They incorporated into their system much that was Christian, but corrupted it in their obstinate devotion to the peculiarities of the Jewish religion. They held to the old covenant, exalted legal righteousness, denied the unique birth of Christ, conceded that the present world belongs to the devil, and maintained the value of asceticism. Their perversion of Christian teaching, however, disturbed only the Church in Syria. As a distinct sect they do not belong to a later date than the third century.

Among all these speculative and philosophical systems, sometimes dangerously hostile and sometimes far more dangerously friendly to Christianity, the Church held firmly to her own way, magnifying the great facts and the pure life of the Gospel, and refusing to be either absorbed or annihilated.

It was in meeting those perilous philosophies and other inimical influences that Christianity developed much of the literature which has survived to modern times. To the second century belongs the priceless work of collecting and preserving the apostolic writings. The earliest Gospels were oral, for at first these sacred writings were not considered essential to the life of the churches. One after another the four "memoirs" of the life of Christ were put into written form. The various epistles were all occasional, having been called out by the exigencies of churches scattered all the way from the extreme East to the extreme West, and were cherished for a time only in the particular churches to which they had been addressed. By the beginning of the second century various manuscripts were in circulation which could with difficulty be distinguished from genuine apostolic writings. Out of this condition arose the necessity of sifting out and preserving the documents which had come from authoritative sources. The process was gradual by which the results were gained which have endured the test of time. At the end of this period no fewer than five books now in the Canon, viz., James, Second

Peter, Second and Third John, and Revelation, were named by Eusebius as "antilegomena," that is, spoken against; and for a number of decades certain other writings were held to be of doubtful authority.

Not much of the literature of the second century is extant. Probably literary productions were not numerous, and many that lived for a time have perished through multiplied vicissitudes. Among the most interesting and valuable of these that survive may be named the Epistle of Clement, sent to the Corinthian Church from Rome about 96 A. D., to pacify certain contentions there; the "Teachings of the Twelve Apostles," discovered in 1875, which is one of the earliest writings after the days of the apostles, having been probably constructed at the close of the first century. It is a manual of instructions for catechumens, and gives rules for the reception of different classes, with regulations for worship and discipline, together with practical instruction as to Christian conduct.

"The Epistle to Diognetus" is considered the gem of these early productions. It is poor and spiritless in style, but wide in its scope of doctrine; showing the worthlessness of idolatry, and exposing the defective-

ness of Jewish worship and customs. At about the same date, not far from the middle of the second century, was sent forth the Epistle to the Philippians, by Polycarp, who in youth sat at the feet of the apostle John, and in his old age gave testimony to his Christian faith by martyrdom.

A little later than this Aristides wrote the first of a long series of "Apologies," called out by misunderstandings of the spirit and teachings of Christianity. Some were addressed to Emperors and some were designed to influence the people whose opposition had grown out of ignorance and bitter prejudice. The best known of these is by Justin Martyr. His personal history is exceedingly interesting and shows a providential training for the defense of Christianity. Probably of Greek extraction, he spent the years of opening manhood first as a Stoic, then as a Pythagorean, and then as a Platonist, in earnest but vain search for the truth about God. At last he was converted to Christianity by conversation with a venerable disciple with whom he strolled by the seashore. One of his apologies was addressed to Antoninus Pius, another as vainly to the Roman Senate.

Some of the ablest writings of the second

and third centuries were by members of the famous catechetical school of Alexandria. Many influences had combined to make this school a center of learning and philosophy. Within it was developed what we should call a Theological Seminary, for the discussion of abstruse points of divinity. The name of Flavius Clement, one of the leaders in Christian thought, has come down to us under the title of "Clement of Alexandria." He was a man of broad culture and catholic temper, an extensive traveler and a profound student of philosophy and the ancient classics. Origen who followed him, and who won an even higher place in that illustrious group of thinkers, was a man of herculean labors and a pioneer in the mazes of "Systematic Theology." As an expounder of Scripture he favored an unproductive and misleading method of allegorizing sacred history; yet his work was of the greatest value in defense of Christianity, especially against the shrewd and scholarly opponent, Celsus.

In the North African Church was Tertullian, born about 160, highly educated in poetry, philosophy and the science of the day and trained to the law. He was converted when thirty years of age, and be-

came a most eminent and prolific writer. Belonging to the Western Church also was Irenaus, who became bishop of Lyons. His birthplace was in the East, where in youth he was a disciple of the aged Polycarp, but in later years he drifted westward, and from his Gallic bishopric sent out elaborate confutations of the various heresies which were disturbing the Church.

At the beginning of this period the weapons of literature were in hostile hands, but before its close the Church had brought into its service all kinds of composition known to paganism, and had given abundant demonstrations of a faith which dared to assert itself against every form of philosophy and religion known to the world.

We are now prepared to trace the devious but upward course by which the Christian Church passed through the ignominy and suffering of two centuries of persecution to final safety and eminence through the conversion of a Roman emperor.

The persecutions of the early Church had three sources. The smaller number originated in the sheer cruelty of monsters like Nero and Domitian, who vented their brutish passions upon an unoffending people. A much larger class were the more or less

direct result of popular alarm and hatred. This was the cause of the outbreak under Trajan. Although not formally recognized by the authorities as the ground of hostile attack upon Christians, yet this aversion of the populace was often behind the unfriendly treatment of the new religion. It is difficult for one who knows only the beneficence of Christianity to understand why in any age there should have been rage and bitterness against the adherents of the Nazarene. But in the early centuries each class of citizens found a reason for its antipathy. The high-born Roman, the haughtiest aristocrat the world has seen, had less of hatred than of disgust and contempt. To him the idea of making artisans and even slaves sharers with him in the brotherhood of Christ, in common humanity and dignity of life, was extremely distasteful. The demand for tender interest in the common ranks of men was most repulsive to the Stoic, for he was educated in the pride of philosophy and personal achievement. His life-long effort had been to lift himself above the level of the masses. To give them sweet fellowship on any basis seemed to him the annihilation of all the ideals he had learned to cherish. Such writers as Pliny and

Tacitus scarcely considered the new "superstition" worthy of more than a passing allusion.

The claim of Christianity to give men ultimate truth concerning the great things of life was to others a grave offence. The possession of assured verity, as against all the speculations and elaborate reasoning of their own philosophers, was a senseless and irritating claim. Still others felt that the new religion was in conflict with the reverence due to their ancestors. They said, "Is not the tradition of the fathers the most venerable and best guide to truth? Let us follow the religion which they have handed down, let us adore the gods whom from childhood we have been trained to fear."

To very many people in the Empire, Christianity was not a religion at all, but sheer atheism. It had no offerings or libations, it had none of the paraphernalia of either the Jewish or pagan religion, hence the very simplicity and purity of its worship misled the undiscerning multitudes. More than this, there were put into circulation stories which, growing by repetition, tended to excite horror and fury. These were of course wicked and groundless scandals, and yet they were widely accepted. They

hinted at human sacrifice, at horrid rites and oaths, and wildest orgies. When, therefore, Christians refused to join in the heathen games they were denounced as gloomy, morose, and unsocial, and as quite capable of all the enormities charged against them.

A third source of persecution, and the most fruitful and persistent of all, was the supposed political necessities of the state. This reason operated in the minds of emperors who were sincerely anxious for the good of the Empire. On the part of Christians it was unavoidable that offence of this sort should be given. All public life was interwoven with heathenism, and as Christians withdrew from it they inevitably ran counter to the apparent interests of the state. They avoided military service because the army was compelled to sacrifice to the gods and consult the auspices; and for the same reason they held back from public office. This brought upon them the charge of disloyalty and lack of patriotism, a charge which seemed to be supported by the very nature of their faith. Other religions were national and exclusive, but Christianity was universal and inclusive. When Christians were seen accepting con-

verted barbarians as brethren the charge was bitterly made, "You are not Romans at all, you are enemies of the state!" At critical times there were special demands for the salutation of the Emperor with divine honors; and when this was of necessity absolutely refused by Christians their religion became a political crime and brought them into flagrant defiance of the laws of the Empire. All this caused serious apprehension on the part of patriotic rulers. To them it was simply rebellion against the established order of things, and they were not far-sighted enough to measure the wholesome possibilities of this new regenerating power.

It is not necessary to note all of the persecutions through which the church passed in the first three centuries, but some of the more conspicuous of them will suggest the whole story.

The first occurred scarcely three decades after Pentecost. It brings to mind one of the unsettled questions of history. Under the reign of Nero there happened to be a conflagration which swept through whole sections of the capital. The suspicion of the people rested upon the Emperor as the guilty originator of a catastrophe over which

he gloated, and in which he found a fresh sensation for his jaded sensibilities, and a new outlet for his Satanic cruelty. In their rage the people demanded a victim, and Tacitus is authority for the statement that Nero falsely accused the Christians of the crime. At any rate there followed a very carnival of blood in Rome. Most ingenious methods of torture and death were devised. Christians were tarred and burned at night to satisfy the cruelty of the populace and to delight the still more inhuman Emperor. There is no evidence, however, that the persecution broke out elsewhere than at Rome.

The reign of Trajan a half-century later became a significant landmark in the history of the Church, because his rule for "accusation and punishment" held with slight modifications for nearly two centuries. It all came about in this way: his friend and official representative in the province of Bithynia, the younger Pliny, reported by letter the progress of the "superstition," and the consequent neglect of the heathen temples, and asked for instructions. Trajan replied: "Let them alone unless you are compelled to take note of the matter by reason of personal and public accusation, then compel these Christians to recognize

the gods or be punished." This, in the year 111, marks the time when by formal decree Christianity became illegal, although it was not strictly by a new statute, but rather by an injunction to enforce existing laws. It sufficed, however, to define the attitude of the state and to furnish ground for rigorous administration of the law.

It is not probable that Trajan designed the infliction of injustice and cruelty, but he furnished easy ground for hostile action on the part of men unfriendly to the new religion. Under priestly instigation an accuser had only to make a formal charge against a Christian. The magistrate would then cause the images of the gods and the Emperor to be brought in, and command the accused to sacrifice to them with incense, and curse the name of Christ; which, of course, no real Christian would do. The application of this test brought no wholesale slaughter; yet it made the situation of every Christian family one of peril and apprehension. A bit of malice on the part of any heathen might at any moment bring disaster.

The succeeding Emperor, Hadrian, whose reign extended from 117 to 138, was versatile and cultivated, fond of literature, art and of travel. Toward the end of his

reign he became moody and at times even cruel. He was a strong adherent of the old religion and the builder of many costly temples; yet holding to the promise of his predecessor, he refused to give way to general complaints and outcries against Christians, and insisted that they should be persecuted only on personal and definite charges.

We may pass over the reigns which followed as being without special significance to the church. At length we come to Marcus Aurelius, whose score of years fall between 161 and 180. His personal history and lofty character are of fascinating interest, but his reign brought to the church the severest strain to which it had yet been subjected. For this persecution there were two causes. On the one hand the exceptional patriotism and energy of the Emperor led him to protect the ancient religion and to revive enthusiasm for the state, and, on the other, a combination of disasters aroused the fanatical hatred and fear of the people against the new religion. These calamities were reported from every side of the Empire. An army sent against the Parthians came back with the plague, which traversed the entire Empire and from which it never

recovered. Then followed a terrible famine; and after the pestilence and famine various outbreaks on the frontier. Of these that along the Danube was one of the severest Rome ever had to encounter; for then it was that her legions met the first waves of the migration which was destined at last to sweep over the entire West. The populace became infuriated against the Christians whose impiety was supposed to have brought upon the state the wrath of the gods.

The reprieve of the church from persecution came through a far less worthy emperor. Commodus, "the ignoble son of a noble father," failed to persecute Christians through sheer indifference to affairs of state. Then followed for scores of years a succession of emperors, for the most part made and unmade by the army, who seldom cared enough about the matter to indulge in active hostility to the new faith. It was not until the middle of the third century, when Christians had so multiplied that Origen for the first time expressed the belief that the Gospel, by its inherent power and without the intervention of a miracle, would supplant the ancient religions, that the prosperity of the church again enkindled the animosity of its opposers.

Decius, whose brief reign extended from 249 to 251, determined to extirpate Christianity and restore the unity and integrity of the Empire. A revival of the policy of Marcus Aurelius by a like-minded patriot took place, and a systematic attempt was made throughout the provinces to compel Christians to renounce their religion and swear allegiance to that of the Empire. It was a fiery trial of the faith and endurance of the church; but fortunately the terrible reign of Decius was brief and out of its horrors came the purified and steadfast remnants of the Lord's hosts.

Then followed, save for the administration of the Decian policy by Emperor Valerian, forty years of almost unbroken rest, giving time for more careful organization and discipline, and preparing the church at large for its final encounter with the forces of heathenism.

The last and most awful persecution occurred during the reign of Diocletian, 284-305, whose attitude toward Christianity was unhappily changed during the later years of his life. Talented, patriotic, zealous, and, at first, not wholly unfriendly to Christianity, his administration gave promise of better things than finally fell to his record.

By the beginning of the fourth century Christianity had gained not only in extent but in standing, and not a few adherents were high at court and trusted advisers of the Emperor, while his wife and daughter were actual disciples of the Christ. But Christianity was not to win its final triumph too easily.

There was a party at court composed of heathen priests, who regarded the advancement of Christians with the greatest disfavor, and who shrewdly and persistently influenced the mind of the Emperor in favor of the ancient rites, whose enforcement would enhance their standing in affairs of state. Many years went by without manifest effect upon the imperial mind, until about 303, when, through the enfeeblement and indecision of age, the Emperor was induced to submit the question of policy to a council in which Galerius, his son-in-law, who inclined toward heathen fanaticism, was influential. Under the tremendous pressure now brought to bear upon him Diocletian finally decided to consult an oracle. The word of the oracle, controlled by heathen priests, could not be doubtful. Christianity was to be checked. The Emperor yielded on the assurance given him by his counselors that it would not be necessary to shed

any blood, as Christians would recant upon the first show of severity.

Thus the floodgates of an awful persecution were opened wide. The fanatical party had fiercely determined to spare no measures looking toward the actual extirpation of Christianity. At first intimidation was relied upon, but when the persecutors were met by heroism they proceeded to cruelest extremes of torture. Successive edicts were more and more sweeping and exacting. Everywhere went the dread demand, "Sacrifice to the gods or die," and a reign of terror prevailed far and wide.

The worst never actually happens, and in 305 the Emperor, discouraged and broken, was forced to resign. Galerius succeeded him at the head of affairs in the East, but in the West his rivals were in the ascendancy, and there persecutions were soon at an end. In the East the horrid work went on for some years, making a record of sickening details of tortures and indignities, but the fires of persecution finally burned themselves out. Brute force could not accomplish its end against the steadfastness and heroism of the Christian faith, and even executioners became weary and disgusted with their inhuman work.

The spell of the cross was upon heathendom. Oppression and cruelty had wrought their utmost, and the triumph of a pure and gentle religion was now not far away. From his death-bed, to which he had come from a life of debauchery and fanaticism, Galerius, in untold agony of body and mind, issued in the year 311 an edict which reversed the policy of two centuries and put an end to official persecution. It was a plain confession of the impotency of heathenism, and closed with a request for the prayers of Christians for the Emperor and the state! This was not a complete and positive victory for Christianity but that was close at hand. The man had already come on the stage who was to distinguish himself by the great historical act of adopting by imperial edict as the religion of the state the despised and persecuted faith of the Nazarene.

By far the most significant event in the history of the fourth century was the conversion of a Roman Emperor to Christianity. For good or ill it changed the status of the new religion in the world. After resting for more than two centuries under the ban of the Empire, Christianity found itself suddenly protected and fostered by royal favor.

Constantine, the first Christian emperor,

was born in 274 of Constantius Chlorus and Helena, a woman of obscure birth but strong character, who became a convert to the new faith and exerted much influence over her son. He grew up to manhood imposing in presence, sagacious in counsel and of extraordinary administrative ability. He was from youth trained to military service, and was highly developed in valor and skill as a soldier. This was most fortunate for him, because in the great crisis of his struggle for supremacy he had need of every resource at his command.

The situation was this. At the death of Galerius four rulers appeared in the field, each governing a separate territory and each preparing for inevitable war with his rivals. Constantine, succeeding to the claims of his father, precipitated the contest in the West. Maxentius, his nearest enemy, held North Africa and Italy. Constantine promptly crossed the Alps with 40,000 men against the 125,000 of his opponent. It was an adventure of great daring, and he felt the solemnity of his undertaking. It was under pressure of such circumstances that he sought supernatural aid. But to which god should he turn? In the hour of mental conflict and disturbance

he beheld on the sky above the sinking sun the emblazoned cross, and read these words: "By this sign you conquer." A vision of the night made the meaning even more clear, and his decision more emphatic. He set the sign of the cross on his helmet, and upon the banner of his army, and caused his soldiers to paint it on their shields. Under the talismanic power of this once despised emblem the army marched from victory to victory until in the fierce battle of Milvian Bridge the forces of his rival were completely broken, and Constantine entered Rome in triumph.

In the East, Licinius triumphed over Maximus and turned to settle the final issue with the conqueror of the West. In 323 he was forced to yield to Constantine, who henceforth became the sole master of the Roman world, and issued edicts establishing unrestricted liberty in religious matters on the ground of the sacred right of conscience.

Two problems are still tantalizing the student who seeks absolute conviction concerning such weighty crises. One question concerns the motives of the Emperor, who has been both lauded to the skies and buried beneath the contempt of historians. How

far was he genuine, and how far shrewd and calculating? Perhaps the solution of the enigma lies in the statement that he was neither wholly good nor wholly bad. There was in the training of this youth a mixture of heathen superstition and of an imperfectly conceived Christianity. It is extremely doubtful if he had any profound moral and religious experience; and it is not at all unlikely that he shrewdly read in the history of the steady development of Christianity against all opposition hints of the way to future aggrandizement. He certainly was not a hypocrite, and almost as certainly not a saint. He may at first have acted from diplomatic motives, but later, under the influences of Christianity, may have been drawn further and further from heathenism and nearer and nearer to the heart of the pure religion.

The other question is far-reaching and possibly beyond confident solution. It may thus be stated: Was it on the whole and in the final issue an advantage to Christianity to have been recognized as the religion of the state? Its immediate interests were now the care of the Emperor who permitted only Christian worship in the new capital of the Empire, and who used his personal influ-

ence by various expedients to gain converts. That there were vast accessions to the church is a matter of course; and, what is of more importance, there was entire freedom from the distress of earlier days. But as has been said, "Imperial favor in place of imperial hostility became a new source of peril." It is true that, "Rome, the conqueror of the world, was herself overcome by a band of Christian disciples whose meek but dauntless courage was more than a match for all her power"; but it is also true that the heroic age of the Church had passed, and that the task of molding the moral life of the world was suddenly thrust upon a Christianity which had now become dominant in society and government; and that long centuries were to elapse before its completion.

CHAPTER III

THE FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

The first period closed with the passing of the specially qualified founders of the Church. At the beginning of that which followed there were no indications which the world could recognize of the ultimate ascendancy of Christianity, but before its close it saw the conversion of a Roman emperor and became almost too ready to hail the new religion as the dominant power and to seek the manifest advantages offered to its adherents.

The third period to which we now come, extending over nearly five hundred years, covers transformations in the political world most intimately related to the welfare of Christianity, and culminates in the crowning, in a great cathedral, of a mightier emperor than Constantine. All the changes of this half-millennium, both external and internal, political, social and ecclesiastical, have the greatest significance. In the year 325, in which the previous cycle closed, the Roman Empire was still intact, though its

integrity had been sharply attacked, and its perilous weakness fully demonstrated. It was destined to hold together, with more or less consistency, for a few centuries; but at the end of this period the last vestige of it disappeared and imperial claims were made by an emperor of a different race, and from a new capital.

To follow intelligently the story of the chances and changes which came to the Christian Church, it will be well to divide the period into three distinct parts. Only thus can we avoid confusion among crowded historical details and obtain a clear and helpful impression of the course of events and the tasks, difficulties, and accomplishments of Christianity in a time of repeated convulsions throughout the civilized world.

I. CHRISTIANITY UNDER THE DECAYING ROMAN EMPIRE

The emperors differed widely from one another in their attitude toward Christianity, and in their influence upon its development. Constantine to the last maintained friendly relations with the religion of his adoption; too close, perhaps, for its best good, for it reaches its highest development when assert-

ing its freedom from the direct control of the state. He was bound to make the imperial power felt in shaping both the doctrine and polity of the Church. He may have been absolutely sincere in his reverence for Christianity and in the belief that he was providentially called to foster it in an age of difficulty and danger; and yet the modifications in the type of character and in the quality of devotion which under his patronage began to manifest themselves within the membership of the Church were not of good augury for the future.

Constantine died in 337, a dozen years after his accession to power as sole emperor, leaving the empire, as did Marcus Aurelius, to unworthy sons. There were the usual unfraternal quarrels about the division of the Empire; but by means of war and intrigue Constantius finally established undivided sway. At first he held the old pagan faith to be a political peril, and consequently persecuted its adherents; developing, unwittingly, martyrs to the dying religion, and demonstrating that splendid reserve of heroism and revolt against tyranny which has so often glorified humanity. Then he became an Arian in the theological divisions of the day, and

true to his spirit and policy persecuted the orthodox party in the Church.

In 361 Constantius was succeeded by his disloyal cousin who has come down to us with the undesirable appellation of "Julian the Apostate." Exactly how just was this epithet it is difficult to decide. At first he professed himself a Christian, but afterward fell into disgust over the disputes and unworthy deeds of his predecessors and of many who were prominent in ecclesiastical affairs. Perhaps the circumstances of his life afford some justification for his final change of attitude toward Christianity. He had a quick imaginative mind, and was susceptible to influences acting upon him. He was being educated as an ecclesiastic when the jealousy of the Emperor toward him was excited, and he was sent away to pursue his studies in Nicomedeia. Here he fell in with a brilliant rhetorician who induced him to embrace the ancient faith. Later, during a visit to Athens, he went further in his enthusiasm and conceived the project of restoring the old religion. This was a great disappointment to the Christians; for on coming to the throne instead of supporting the Church he gave all the weight of his influence as Supreme Pontiff

to the reviving of the out-worn forms of worship. He did indeed grant toleration to Christianity, but wishing to discredit it he sought to foment trouble through sectarian controversies, even bringing back banished agitators of whom the Church were best freed. He had only two years of imperial influence, but in that time he did not a little to help on the reactionary and divisive movements within the Church. During the following reigns, in both the East and the West, Christianity was recognized as the State Religion, and all political hindrances were put in the way of the old religion, so that it gradually fell out of favor and in time became the "Pagan Religion," that is, the religion of peasants, Christianity having become the controlling factor in all cities. The old religion which had opposed itself to the Church for four centuries had fought its last battle, and never again brought terror to Christianity.

The tendencies toward ecclesiasticism which began to manifest themselves even before Christianity gained a lawful place in the state became much more active with the acquisition of freedom and power. The clergy became more and more distinct as a class, not to say as an order in the Church,

and organization became more highly developed. The bishops assumed to be the successors of the apostles and to act as vehicles for conveying divine grace to the lower orders of the clergy; while from the lowest to the highest the gradations of rank and privilege were sharply defined. The great metropolitan bishops exercised the right of calling synods and of presiding over ecclesiastical courts. The bishops of the sees of Rome, Constantinople and Jerusalem, as well as of Antioch and Alexandria, took the name of Patriarchs, and finally a sharp rivalry ensued between Constantinople and Rome for supremacy in the Church at large. The Roman bishop had unique advantages in the contest. The presumption in favor of Rome was increased under the tremendous influence of the great Leo I., who showed extraordinary administrative ability and rendered timely services during the invasion of Italy by the Huns. At the Council of Chalcedon, in the middle of the fifth century, the claim to the first place was conceded to Rome, and the Emperor, Valentinian III., acknowledged the Roman bishop as the supreme head of the Western Church, granting the claim upon the primacy of St. Peter, and the dignity of the

ancient city. For a long time the term "Papa," or "Pope," belonged alike to all bishops, but within a century or two by imperial decree it came to be exclusively applied to the highest ecclesiastic at Rome.

The elaboration of worship also went on under combined influences which inevitably swept away the simplicity and naturalness of earlier days. For two centuries the Church opposed the splendor of pagan worship with its own simplicity; but after the stamp of imperial favor had been given, and the rich and influential came flocking to the once despised standard of the cross, the plain basilica, secured for the use of a Christian congregation, no longer sufficed. The Christians demanded costly temples of their own, with a service richly elaborated to correspond with the new surroundings. Sometimes public buildings or pagan temples were transferred through the munificence of emperors to the uses of the Church, and were consecrated with imposing ceremonies. Often there was rich interior decoration and symbolism, with the cross made prominent amid settings of precious stones. Upon the walls were depicted Biblical scenes, or the sufferings of holy martyrs. Toward the end of the fourth

century, very largely to accommodate the multitudes of half-converted heathen who crowded into the Church, images were introduced and even made objects of religious adoration. Legends of miraculous healings easily grew in an atmosphere of ignorance and superstition, and as the heroic age passed away veneration for martyrs and "saints" became extravagant. Partially Christianized pagans regarded them very much as before they had looked upon their deified heroes. Their favor and aid were invoked, and relics were depended upon to work desired ends. One who reads the details of corruption in the Church at this time is reminded of the golden calf worship which Jeroboam set up in Israel and which proved itself an idolatrous abomination. Nothing but the inherent power of goodness and spirituality in the gospel saved Christianity from the fate of the mongrel religion of Samaria.

Two special features of perverted religion came in at this time and have persisted through the centuries. One is the growth of Mariolatry. From the earliest time the memory of the Virgin Mary was naturally and properly held in tender respect, but under prevailing influences, perhaps in part

from the honor paid in the old religion to goddesses, she became an object of reverence and formal worship. The second is found in the exaltation of the Lord's Supper to the rank of a sacrifice, offered by a Christian priest and acquiring a special efficacy. It was around the celebration of the Eucharist that ancient liturgies grew up, including the "Gloria in Excelsis," and the "Te Deum."

It was during this period that tendencies toward asceticism and monasticism became dominant in various sections of Christendom. The movement was false to Christianity. Its influence was unhealthy, unmanly, and in the largest sense unspiritual. There is no trace of such a thing in the conduct or teaching of Christ, nor indeed in the writings of any apostle, and yet it is not wholly inexplicable. For one thing there was a leaning toward such a strained and perverted life in the earlier religions and philosophies, and Christianity simply became an inheritor of these false notions. It was not unknown among the Jews, one sect, the Essenes, having developed asceticism as their distinguishing trait. Among the Buddhists of India it was a predominant characteristic, while the hermits

of Egypt also magnified the virtue of isolation from a world essentially evil.

Besides, there was a degree of luxury and moral corruption prevalent in society that made it almost impossible for a spiritually-minded man to live with other men in the ordinary fellowships and engagements of life. The experiment of outward separation had not then been proven a futile one. There was a lack of fine and broad intelligence concerning the conditions and demands of Christianity. So men turned away from the allurements and engagements of an evil and self-destroying world to save their own souls alive and to cultivate their own piety at any cost. It is easy to see how they might have looked outward and upward at the same time; and how they thus missed the real devotion and the noble robustness of a true Christian life. But it is not easy to understand from what a troublesome world they fled and what a mighty hold the idea of self-humiliation and self-saving had upon the minds of men during this period. It not only touched the unintelligent multitudes and fanatical individuals, but it brought under its sway and converted into veritable monks, or at least into supporters of the movement, the greatest theo-

logians and leaders in the Church, both in the East and in the West.

As an example we may turn to Anthony, the patron saint of the anchorites, the ideal of the holy hermit weaned from a wicked world. As a lad he showed a reflective habit, which was intensified by the early loss of his parents, and a succession of cares and troubles. As he came to manhood and began to brood over Christian experience and revelation he misinterpreted Christ's words to the young ruler, and also his injunction to his disciples to take no thought for the morrow, and so was led to part with all of his property. He broke the loving and tender ties which bound him to an only sister, thinking such affection worldly and unholy, and sought the companionship of aged ascetics, finally giving himself up to "pious meditations" in a mountain cave. Morbid fancies and passions not unnaturally fastened upon him. These he was compelled to fight without the healthy and absorbing occupations and interests of social life. There seemed no refuge except in retiring into remoter and deeper solitude, although he escaped with difficulty from the increasing number who venerated him for his austerities and supernal piety.

This tendency to seclusion developed into a system in the institution of the cloister. At first on an island of the Nile a company of like-minded saints organized into classes graded according to piety, working at simple trades and giving their earnings and benefactions to the poor. It was all a mistake. They sought merit before God, and, by a poorly disguised system of barter, heavenly rewards. Nothing could have been more untrue to the instincts and demands of human life, and few things could have been more hurtful to character. It was a matter of course that there should be violent and morbid reactions, and not infrequently an unbalancing of mind, with occasional outbreaks into wildest excesses.

In the West the tendency was toward the formal life of monks; rather than that of anchorites, which prevailed in the East, and which the climate favored. Cloisters and settlements were here and there established, sometimes on the basis of noble and aggressive work, like the famous monastery at Iona, an island off the Scottish coast, from whence devoted Christian workers were sent to the mainland. Occasionally some one arose who condemned the excesses of these orders, or even the orders themselves,

on the ground that the ordinary Christian life was natural and holy, but their protest being opposed by the great teachers was ineffectual. The false notion prevailed at that time that places and actions were to be sharply distinguished as sacred or secular, and centuries were to pass before the idea became dominant that the whole life of man may be consecrated and pure.

One of the marked characteristics of this period is found in the doctrinal controversies which occupied the Church for centuries. For the first two hundred years and more there was no "body of doctrine"; no formulated articles of belief from which "heresies" could be distinguished. The philosophical side of Christian teaching had not engaged the attention of the Church, and men were content to worship and trust without having determined the exact "nature of Christ" or the true "philosophy of the atonement." But after a time many men came into the Church who had been steeped in Greek culture and philosophy, and who by their mental habits were compelled to inquire into the foundations of their new faith. They had questions to ask and answers to give. The Gospel story and Gospel doctrine are simple to the mind of a

child, but in them are deep problems for the philosophic thinker. Curiosity and interest having been aroused endless discussion began, and various schools of theology were developed according to circumstances, or to personal temperament and bent; and so the Church became agitated and even divided because those who had the same faith had not the same philosophy.

The school at Alexandria, under the powerful leadership of Origen, although characterized by excellent breadth and spirituality, unfortunately adopted the allegorical method of interpreting Scripture, by which any utterance could be made to mean anything. The school of Antioch, with a more sober and practical spirit, held to the direct and historical method of handling the sacred writings. Each of these schools became a center of theological influence; while in the West were developed tendencies quite unlike either of them. As time went on, the East turned more and more toward speculation, and became absorbed in abstruse questions concerning the Trinity, the Person of Christ, and the nature of the Atonement; while the West, with an evident distaste for the metaphysical subtleties of the Orient, was more interested in

practical inquiries about the working of the human will, the essence of sin, and the ways of grace.

Some great names have come down the centuries and are being constantly met with by readers of the present generation—such as Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria, Eusebius of Cæsarea, the two Gregories and Basil of Cappadocia. Of these some were philosophers, some orators and some statesmen. John Chrysostom was known as the golden-mouthed orator of Constantinople. Ambrose of Milan, of the same period, namely, the last half of the fourth century, was one of the powerful leaders of the Church. A Roman, trained for the bar, he was the prefect at Milan when he was raised by acclamation to the throne of an archbishop, in which exalted position he exhibited both wisdom and energy. Jerome, who belonged to the same age, was learned in the literature of both the Greeks and Romans, and produced in his cell in Bethlehem the Latin version of the Bible known as the "Vulgate." Augustine, his contemporary, exerted a more widespread and lasting influence on the theology of both the Catholic and Reformed churches than any thinker since the days of St. Paul. His

personal history is full of startling features. His father was a pagan of low and vulgar life, but his mother was a woman of distinguished Christian piety. The son passed through all the stages that lay between the extremes occupied by his parents. In youth he was put under the rhetorical training so magnified in the esteem of the day, and was also thoroughly grounded in heathen philosophy. Later he became devoted to the Manichæans, in whose doctrine he encountered an infusion of Christianity. For a time he was charmed with Neo-Platonism, but it failed to give full satisfaction, and finally, after a young manhood somewhat lax in morals, judged from a Christian standpoint, and devoted to unspiritual philosophizing, at the age of thirty-three he was soundly converted. Coming into the Church through the profoundest experience of sin and grace, holding fast to convictions which never wavered, maturing and consecrating the habits of philosophizing in which he had been trained, he was fitted to become the great theologian of the West. It is to be gratefully recognized that with unsurpassed earnestness, with wide learning and the highest rhetorical skill, he devoted all his powers and acquisitions to the defense

and exposition of the gospel of grace. And yet one is compelled to follow with regret in the troubled history of succeeding centuries the bias of his teaching toward practical and speculative errors. To him was due the one-sided magnifying of Predestination as against Freeagency in man; the domination of the Roman See; the doctrine of Purgatory, the possible damnation of unbaptized infants, and certain grotesque features of the doctrine of the Resurrection. This all illustrates the enormous difficulties encountered and overcome by Christianity, not only in the perverted sentiments and practices of the heathen ages, but also in the crude and mistaken philosophies of the day.

It may be of interest to briefly characterize the three great controversies of the period. The first concerned the Divinity of Christ, and the Trinity, the second had to do with the two natures involved in the Person of Christ, the third occupied itself with the question of the balance of truth between Divine and Human Agency in Sin and Salvation. Each was passed upon by an œcumenical council

The first controversy was precipitated by Arius, a Presbyter of Alexandria, a man

serious in character, austere in disposition, and keen in intellect. He found a solution of the problem of the Trinity by presenting Christ as a created being, exalted indeed to the highest rank and the agent of creation, yet himself derived from the Everlasting Father. After fierce agitation and sharp division Constantine thought to restore unity by means of the decision of a general council, which he proceeded to call at Nicæa to consider the question at issue. In the year 325 three hundred and eighteen bishops, mostly from the East, came together in solemn conclave. The proceedings were opened by the Emperor in person, who entered "in all the majesty of his imperial state." It was a vain exhortation, however, that he gave to the assembled bishops, to strive for unity and harmony, for at once the controversy between the tall, ascetic, and nervous Arius, and the young arch-deacon Athanasius, who though not yet thirty was the champion of the extreme doctrine opposed to that of the heretic, broke out. There were three distinct parties in the Council, among which the members, with their fine shadings of belief were divided. As all the world knows, the decision went with the Athanasian party. Very

many would have preferred a deliverance declaring that Christ had like essence with the Father, a statement which would have been acceptable to Arius, and might have satisfied the orthodox; but, as usual in times of controversy, the issue was pressed to the sharpest definition of differences. The authoritative utterance went forth attended by severe penalties threatened against those who differed from the form of Christianity now acknowledged by the Empire; but the result was not such as the victorious party looked for. The controversy continued, with no little bitterness on both sides, and led to not a few banishments. After a half-century of discussion, with varying tides, the Nicene theology came to permanent ascendancy and has never been seriously disturbed, though the evil fruitage of bitter contention was abundant in many lands for many centuries.

The second problem was introduced by the theorizing of Apollinaris, Bishop of Laodicea, who interpreted the expression, "The Word became flesh," to mean that the Logos took the place of the rational human soul in the man Christ Jesus. In the Alexandrian view the two natures of Christ were unified in the predominance of the Divine,

while in the Antiochian theory the two natures remained distinct, the human will having free and independent action. Instead of allowing time and open discussion to determine probabilities in the case, the controversy was continued in bitterness; and anathemas and counter-anathemas filled the air. It was to settle this dispute that the General Council of Ephesus was called in 431. It is probable that the methods by which it was organized and managed were little in harmony with the ethics of the Master, the mysteries of whose being were under discussion. There were two different meetings with two different results; but in the end the banishment of Nestorius was secured, and through him was developed in the Orient an heretical branch of the Church which has continued even to the present day.

The third controversy was mainly Western and concerned itself not so much with the nature of the divine as of the human personality. Pelagius, a British monk, came to Rome in the last decade of the fourth century. He was serious, strict in morals, and clear in understanding. The prevailing laxity which he observed even in the clergy offended his sense of Christian

morality. Casting about for an explanation of the inconsistencies he put the blame upon the doctrine of man's helplessness. Out of his own experience in the vigorous resistance of evil he came to oppose the prevailing belief in man's helplessness and utter dependence upon grace divine. Augustine held his ground against him and out of the controversy two distinct systems of doctrine about sin, freedom, recovery and grace arose. Each school magnified a truth, but by the controversy the two combatants were, as always happens, driven farther and farther apart. Augustine held that Adam had free will until he sinned as federal head of the race, when the will of man came into perpetual bondage to evil, from which it could be released only by sovereign grace. Pelagius said that we sin only in imitation of Adam, and that the human will is as free as ever in every act of life.

The synod of Carthage, 412, excommunicated Coelestius, the friend and supporter of Pelagius, for heresy. But a few years later two synods in Palestine, before which assemblies Pelagius appeared in person, acquitted him of the charge. So back and forth rolled the tide of battle, with various decisions and excommunications and shad-

ings of doctrine. Gregory, surnamed "the Theologian," who presided over the Council of Constantinople, 381, said he had never known a synod that did not aggravate the evils which it undertook to remedy. Cardinal Newman, an admirer of œcumenical councils, said fifteen hundred years later, that there was nothing to boast of in behalf of the fathers who composed the councils, taken individually, for they appeared as an antagonistic host in a battle, rather than as shepherds of their people.

It must be acknowledged that in general there was a falling off in the grade of moral and religious life during this period—and no wonder. When Christianity became the fashionable and favored religion of the Empire, self-indulgent people crowded into the church. The new adherents easily accepted the formalities of a religious life, baptism, ceremonies, church attendance and alms-giving. The result was two most undersirable extremes of conduct; on the one hand great laxity of morals; on the other a "ghostly and unearthly asceticism." The Church would have dealt much more effectively with problems of character if it had been left to itself, but emperors and state officials intermeddled, sometimes

patronizing and sometimes bullying the Church, and always corrupting its purity with touches of worldliness or insincerity.

There were, however, notable instances of firm and brave adherence to the highest standards even against kings who had professed Christianity. Upon one notable occasion Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, compelled the Emperor Theodosius to do severest penance for a massacre in Thessalonica; although the order had been given in retaliation for the murder of a military governor.

Upon another occasion Athanasius, emulating the example of John the Baptist in restraining a ruler from bad deeds, addressed Constantine as he passed on horseback through the streets of Constantinople, and the haughty spirit of the Emperor was awed by the courage and eloquence of the bishop.

To the Emperor Julian, Basil Bishop of Cæsarea, sent a severe reply to an imperial threat; afterward undauntedly facing a commission and later still the Emperor himself.

II. MOHAMMEDANISM, THE BITTER FOE OF CHRISTIANITY

It is an amazing thing that a nation of wandering Arabs should have set out for

the conquest of the world, and a greater wonder than they should have been so nearly successful. The unheralded upshooting of a new religion had its characteristics in "the genius and passionate fanaticism of Mohammed." The author of this new religion was born at Mecca in 572. His early life was obscure, but his marriage at twenty-eight with Kadija, a wealthy widow, relieved him of worldly care, gave him leisure for contemplation, and furnished him some inspiration. He was sincerely shocked by the religious indifference and degeneracy of his countrymen. Judaism and Christianity had both penetrated this region, but had become debased in doctrine and worn out in spiritual power. It was not, however, until Mohammed had reached the age of forty that he began to have, as he believed, or pretended to believe, intimations as to his divine mission. These visions may have been the result of hysteria and epilepsy to which he was subject. At first he was inclined to attribute them to the work of an evil spirit, but his wife overruled his doubts and persuaded him that he was in receipt of revelations from God. At last he began to make the announcement, "There is one God, and Mohammed is his prophet," and

the new faith which was styled "Islam," signifying resignation to the divine will, was launched upon the sea of human life.

Mohammed was persecuted by a powerful prince, and, being compelled to flee in 622 A. D., the date of his flight from Mecca came to be celebrated as the Hegira, and from it the Mohammedan calendar is still reckoned. His personal power was great. His commanding presence, eloquent speech, pleasing manners and his enthusiasm as a teacher made him a political leader and religious reformer in the city of Medina. He succeeded at last in winning the favor of the Arab tribes, and in 630 re-entered Mecca; and before the two remaining years of his life had passed he had succeeded in destroying idolatry. These last two years were filled with preparations for an expedition against the Greeks, in hope of executing his commission to abolish idolatry from all the lands of earth.

Mohammed was a strange mixture of high devotion to the will of God, and of craft, fierceness and cruelty in furthering his own purposes. The doctrine and ordinances of his religion are preserved in the Koran, which is a record of the revelations which came to him through the angel Gabriel, and

which his followers accept as the Word of God. It contains no original ideas, but is a mongrel collection of sayings from Rabbinical literature, apocryphal gospels, and other sources. Its central and majestic truth is the doctrine of monotheism, which was borrowed from the Jews, but the doctrine of holiness is obscured. Its portraiture of God's omnipotence and resistless energy leads to the most extreme fatalism. The torments of idolators in hades and the joys of the faithful in a sensual paradise are depicted with graphic realism.

Mohammed was succeeded in leadership by caliphs who combined the usual functions of emperor and pope. Absolutism of government and fury for conquest secured a rapid spread of dominion for the Moslems. The heathen, apostates, and schismatics were given the choice,—“The Koran and tribute, or death.” Arabian armies went forth full of unquenchable fanaticism and of zeal for plunder. Equally to the living victor and the slain were assured the joys of a tempting paradise, and no man spared himself. The sweep of these conquering hosts passes belief. By 637 Jerusalem and Damascus had fallen to them. Africa was next invaded and conquered,

and Persia followed in the fatal order. By the next century advances had been made along the north of Africa, and thence into Spain, which in eight years was subjected to the rule of Islam.

The Pyrenees did not stay the armies of the Caliph, and about 725 an immense train passed the mountain barriers and began to ravage the cities and fields of southern Gaul, and to threaten religion and civilization just as they were beginning to manifest development upon the basis of Roman culture and German virility. It is almost impossible to exaggerate the significance of the issue to which the two rival religions and types of civilization were brought by this invasion of Western Europe. The advance from far away Arabia had been unchecked, and now there was opposed to the deathly march of the Moslems only scattered and disunited forces of the various peoples who had settled in different sections west of the Rhine, but had never fused into one nationality. It is to the immortal credit of Charles Martel that he succeeded in rallying the discordant elements of Europe in united and determined resistance to the Saracenic invasion. It was on the plains between Tours and Poitiers that Charles

marshaled his warriors and saved Europe by the total defeat and rout of the confident host, the fragments of which he drove back across the Pyrenees. Spain was to suffer for centuries from Moorish occupation; but the northern countries in which the progressive civilization of Christianity and sound culture was to be worked out were saved from the hopeless blight of Mohammedanism.

III. CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE NEW NATIONS OF EUROPE

During a considerable part of the period under consideration assaults were being made upon the ancient Roman Empire by emigrant peoples from the north. They beat upon the outer lines of defense during the troubled years of Marcus Aurelius. In the following centuries the storm raged with greater fury against the breakwaters of the whole northern boundary. Hordes of fierce and barbarous peoples were restlessly pushing southward and westward from an apparently inexhaustible source in the ill-defined region beyond the limits of the Empire. A thousand years before there had been a similar outpouring from these same lands, and a downward movement into the peninsulas

of Greece, Italy and Spain, where were formed in the long process of time nations whose civilization was to enrich mankind for all ages.

Now came a second flood of these rude tribes, bent on pillage or occupation. Their previous history has been forever lost. These barbaric tribes, coming now for the first time upon the arena of historic nations, comprised Goths and Vandals, Ostrogoths, Franks and Burgundians. Although evidently of a common racial origin, they had few political or social bonds, and centuries were required to weld them into unity of nationality. Some causes must, however, have acted alike upon them to bring about such expeditions and migrations.

It was a time of great peril, and the gains which had been made in respect to civilization and religion were in danger of being swept away. In the turmoil of barbarian inroads the old political lines were broken, the old social conditions were destroyed, and the religion which had just made conquest of the Roman Empire was put to new straits. How could Christianity survive the wreck of ancient institutions and the successive influxes of warrior tribes? The once flourishing churches of the Orient be-

came weakened and forceless under the Ottoman invasion. What could save the churches of the West when overrun by the untamed people that were sweeping across the Rhine and the Danube? When the ramparts to the north should give way, what could prevent the complete inundation of Christian lands by a tide of barbarism?

The power of a deeply-founded civilization, backed by a pure and deathless religion, gave the final mastery to the forces of the Kingdom. This is the secret of the victory for the best element of human society, as seen in the gradual process by which the Western Empire was overthrown. Time was the ally of Christianity, which thus found opportunity to work itself out in the regeneration of the new races. At first there were marauding incursions of greater or less extent, bringing more or less of disturbance and loss. Then large bodies pushed through the ancient lines and found settlement, for a while recognizing Rome, and even enlisting in her weakened and scattered armies. Finally came the inexhaustible stream of invaders, spoiling rich cities, occupying fertile lands, and making havoc of society.

It was a gigantic task that Christianity

unflinching assumed, to mold the lives of these rude peoples into forms of beauty and good order. As it had succeeded in transforming the Empire into whose heathenism it entered, so it hopefully girded itself for this new and more difficult undertaking. It believed itself capable of infusing a new spirit into the barbarians and molding their ideas and sentiments according to standards of righteousness. By this time the Church had become an organized force, multitudes were enrolled in its membership, institutions of religion were matured, and able men were in positions of authority and influence. Moreover, aggressive missionary work was being done; and before the sacking of Rome the Gothic tribes had learned from devoted preachers who sought them out in their northern forests something about the religion of Christ.

In some respects there was at first a direct advantage to Christianity from the work of these iconoclastic invaders. It was as early as 410 A. D. when the gates of Rome yielded to Alaric, and the ancient heathenism of the Empire had not quite lost its hold upon society. When the Eternal City was sacked the shrines of the ancient religion were pillaged, and patrician families

who were the chief supporters of the decaying faith were scattered or destroyed. This gave the death blow to paganism, which in the face of a dominant Christianity had persisted so long.

For two centuries there were constant inroads from these loosely confederated nations, especially across the Rhine into Gaul and on into Spain. They divided and subdivided the conquered territory among themselves, thus separating it from the rest of the Empire. These invaders were without rights save those of conquest, and yet they had in them, as history has demonstrated, the fundamental elements of a stable Christian civilization. They proved themselves capable of assimilating in time the learning and the religion already developed by the Greeks and Romans.

At this point came a crisis in the affairs of men, a turning point in the interests of humanity, when the earlier invaders of Germanic stock successfully resisted the invasion of their newly-acquired lands by a people more barbaric than ever they had been and far less susceptible to civilization. At Chalons, in one of the "decisive battles of the world," the Huns under Attila were, at the middle point of the fifth cen-

ture, turned back from their attempt to possess themselves of Gaul and Spain. It is not clear by what influences they had been induced to undertake this ambitious expedition. It may have been upon the appeal of the Emperor's jealous sister; it may have been upon an ill-advised invitation to assist in the conquest of Northern Africa; it may have been merely the restlessness and ambition of the remarkable leader of the Hunnish host. After crossing the Rhine their ruthlessness aroused against them all the forces at the command of both Gaul and Rome. For the last time the armies of the Empire were to do service for the ancient civilization, as, in union with the Gallic forces, under the combined leadership of Aetius and Theodoric, they met the vast army of Attila, numbering possibly 700,000, and defeated them in one of the most important contests recorded in history.

In tracing the work of Christianity among the new nations of Europe we come first of all to ancient Britain. It was during the incursions of the Vandals, in 410 A. D., that Roman troops were withdrawn from the British isles, leaving the Christian civilization which had been fostered there at the mercy of the rude Picts and Scots who in-

vaded Britain from the north. About 450 came the Angles and Saxons, driving the inhabitants into Cornwall and Wales and for generations subjecting the island to Teutonic heathenism. About 600 the Angles and Saxons were reached from Rome by Gregory, who, while an abbot, had noted with interest fair slaves of their race in the market-place, and who on becoming pope sent the abbot Augustine with numerous followers to convert the English. Two hundred years after the withdrawal of the Roman legions, came these legions of the Cross, and established themselves in Kent. Won by the simple, unselfish life of the monks, King Ethelbert gave Augustine a residence where he was made the first "Archbishop of Canterbury."

The next generation found as firm a supporter in the north, in King Edwin of Northumbria, who had married a daughter of Ethelbert.

It was about 450 A. D. that Ireland received Christianity through the labors of Patricius, the "St. Patrick" of a later day. He was born a little south of the Clyde, of Christian parents, and was himself converted when only a lad. In youth he was carried off by pirates to Ireland and put to humble

service in tending sheep. Having been preserved in many adventures he felt himself called in a vision of the night to carry the Gospel to the land of his captivity. He went to the people among whom as a lad he had been a slave, gathered them in open fields and preached with such sincerity as to touch the hearts of both peasants and chiefs. Though not himself a learned man, Patricius succeeded in establishing cloisters as centers of learning and piety, so that his influence was felt for centuries even in remote parts of Europe.

Germany proved a hard field to conquer. To break down the reverential worship of the Germanic peoples for the gods of their fathers, to soften their fierce hearts; and to accomplish this through the agency of ecclesiastics representing a foreign power, was a task of supreme difficulty. Yet Christianity not only made rapid strides among the German people, it found in them assimilative qualities and elements rare among the men of degenerate Rome. There was in them an independence, courage, faithfulness and purity most unlike the type of character encountered in the Empire; and which under the touch of a pure religion developed into character of noble proportions.

It was within the bounds of ancient Gaul that Christianity was to find its early development in the molding of a new empire. About 500 A. D., Clovis, King of the Franks, was converted to Christianity, or at least to its formal adoption and support. His wife, Clotilde, was already a Christian, and was making appeals in behalf of her religion to her royal husband. Before a decisive battle the King vowed if victory were granted to him, to worship the God of the Christians. It was after he returned victorious from battle that the famous baptism of the King and three thousand warriors occurred. Of course Clovis was still a barbarian at heart, and was only slightly restrained from ambition and cruelty, yet his influence was favorable to the spread of Christianity. The church of Gaul lent him support, and the Franks became dominant with their Catholic faith, as against that of the Burgundians, which strongly inclined to Arianism.

All through the fifth and sixth centuries Christianity was contending for mastery over these new peoples, who, with all their half-tamed rudeness, never failed to manifest force and capacity. Although coming out of rough antecedents, they recognized

the finer phases of personal character and felt the moral force of the Christian Church. Yet their hereditary habits put religion to a constant strain, and it is not surprising that for a time the standard of church life and even of the ministry should have fallen. According to the ideals prevailing at the present time the Christianity of this troublous period was scarcely more than nominal. It was by a very gradual process that spiritual truths and moral demands came at last to supplant the crude polytheistic notions which had held these tribes for generations, and displaced their cruelty and superstition with faith and gentleness. The wonder is that even after the lapse of many generations the spirituality and purity of Christianity should have won against such tremendous odds.

As we come toward the close of this period, the details of which cannot here be given, we note the same alliance of Church and state which was encountered at the adoption of Christianity by Emperor Constantine. For a long time there had been more or less confusing of the function of Church and state in the new lands. In Gaul, Britain, and Germany the political sovereign was always inclined to encroach

upon the province of the Church, making laws and appointments which should have been left to the ecclesiastical authorities. In the final and dramatic issue which is to be recorded, it is an open question whether the cause of Christianity made a gain or suffered a loss. It is certain that for a century the power of the Papacy was increasing throughout the West. It grew by reason of the personal strength and wisdom of the bishops; by the zealous activities of missionaries; and was possibly strengthened by the alliance made with Pepin, the powerful King of the Franks. Gregory III., the Pope of this period, proved himself a man of great strength of character, and an official of shrewdness and power. A devout monk, he had been gradually advanced to the papal throne, where he continued earnest in the cause of morality and fervent in personal piety; checking heresies, suppressing disorders, and bringing the Church of the West into close relation to the authorities at Rome. For the sake of strengthening the papal influence in the distant regions of the West he made a compact with Pepin, who had sought the moral support of the Church. In 752 A. D., through the apostolic legate, Boniface, Pepin was anointed and crowned

King. This was the beginning of the papal claim for dominion in temporal affairs, a claim immensely strengthened through the crowning of his son, the far more powerful and famous Charlemagne. All this was in accordance with ideas coming into prominence and destined to play a leading part in the historic drama of succeeding centuries. It was held that the Kingdom of God manifested itself in two directions, toward spiritual dominion through the Pope, toward temporal dominion through the Empire, and that, therefore, all the affairs of human society were the concern of the official representatives of the Kingdom.

When a serious insurrection occurred in Italy which nearly cost Pope Leo III. his life, he fled over the Alps to take refuge in the court of the Frankish monarch. There a request was made by the Pope that Charlemagne come to Rome to reestablish order; and it was at the invitation also of the Pope that a vast body of the people were assembled to welcome him in the Basilica of St. Peter. Thus was an opportunity furnished for merging the two great co-ordinate powers, the Church and the state, which had before this been only partially and indefinitely joined. It was in the midst of the sol-

em services of this famous Christmas Day in the year 800 A. D. that the Pope, acting as the head of the Church and as representative of the Roman people, suddenly advanced and placed a crown upon the head of Emperor Charlemagne amid the plaudits of the populace, thus solemnly binding together two distinct powers which have never yet found harmony of action in any generation or in any land.

CHAPTER IV

THE MIDDLE AGES

The fourth period, like the one last under review covers almost exactly five hundred years namely from the beginning of the ninth to the close of the fourteenth century. These five hundred years constitute the so-called "Middle Ages," intervening as they do between two distinct types of government and civilization. It cannot be claimed that this period is marked by indisputable boundaries, although its general characteristics are unmistakable. Students of history may differ in the matter of a century or two in establishing the limits of this transitional period, and yet be in substantial agreement as to the distinctive conditions of society and government and as to the peculiar lines of advancement in civilization. One cannot be far out of the way in saying that the influence of the Western Roman Empire continued up to the crowning of Charlemagne on that memorable Christmas Day in the year 800 and that by 1300 there had come to be an outlook toward modern

nationalities and modern types of civilization. The road had been long and rough yet the majestic march of progress never halted, and slowly but surely "the old order changed, giving place to new." Through crises in which the interests of civilization trembled in the balance mankind entered another cycle of development.

The characteristics of the Roman world are readily noted. The elements which were shaping and controlling society to its advantage came out of the culture of the Greeks, out of their high intellectual life with its philosophy, art and literature, and also out of the splendid institutions developed by the Romans, who possessed a genius for law, order and administration. The combined contributions of these two kindred nations did not furnish all the elements needful for the development of personal character and social life, and yet they did establish regularity and co-ordination, and secured a grade of social life which was demonstrably higher and more stable than that attained by other ancient people. When the influences which had made Greece and Rome were in a measure lost to the world, in place of order came widespread disorder and social perils without number. It was a

protracted period, broken, changeful, uncertain, with everything of value to mankind,—social order, government, intellectual life, morals and religion,—at stake. But it was not unproductive. New forces were constantly coming into play, and as old ideas died out new ones were born. Outworn institutions were overwhelmed and buried from sight, but new organizations of better adaptability to a new order of things were devised. At last came, with the apparent suddenness always attending the final stages of development, MODERN CIVILIZATION,—with its common characteristics in France, Germany, England and elsewhere,—a civilization which has had centuries of continuance and unfolding.

This period is not infrequently termed the “Dark Ages,” and with evident propriety if only it be remembered that through its hours of deepest shadow the world moves toward a new day. There is no such thing as absolute darkness. Far up in the heavens light dwells eternal, and some rays struggle through the murkiest atmosphere earth ever knows. There have been no centuries of human history utterly devoid of present illumination and of the promise of better things to come. But relatively the

middle ages were gloomy enough. The whole period was dark, distressful, doubtful. There was a turning and overturning until chaos threatened to reign triumphant. There was such a manifest destructiveness in the barbarian occupation of lands once held by the legions of Rome, there was such a mingling of discordant elements in society, human life and property were in such constant peril, learning was so conspicuously wanting and religion at such a low ebb, that the eye sweeps over these stretches of time in what seems at first a vain search for points of light and signs of promise.

It must have been difficult for the noblest and most aspiring in these troublous times to gain a broad outlook for the progress of mankind. There was but a meager basis for nationality with its strongly centered life and its grand appeals to patriotic devotion. The bonds which could hold various peoples in common interest and friendliness were few and feeble. There was a lack of the fundamental medium of intercourse between people, for even language was in a "state of flux." In all the southern countries of Europe there were for generations intermediate and changeful forms of speech. The Roman soldiers and colonists had set-

tled in various sections, bringing with them their Latin tongue, which was strong enough to prevail as the basis of Italian, Spanish and French. But from time to time there came in the invading nations from beyond the Rhine with their rude barbarian dialects. It took centuries to weld into composite but unified language these varied elements of speech, and meanwhile there was no vernacular common to the many, much less one capable of expressing refined and ennobling thoughts and sentiments. Literature for a considerable period was lacking. That which had been developed in Greece and Rome was no longer available, and the new harvest had yet to be garnered.

It was an age of general and gross ignorance. Yet it was a period presenting fascinating problems to the student of history; and the striking contrasts here and there displayed account for its fruitfulness in producing the elements of a broader and higher civilization than men had before known. It becomes more and more clear that much of greatest moment to humanity was being wrought out, and that the way was being prepared for solid and lasting gains. Professor Fisher in a notable passage characterizes this period thus: "One is struck with

the strong contrasts that present themselves in every province of life, and lend to it a picturesque character. By the side of the brilliant attire of the prince and the bishop, we see the coarse frock of the monk and the rags of the peasant. In the vicinity of the mighty cathedral, whose spires rise above the tallest trees of the forest, are the mean dwelling of the mechanic and the peasant's miserable hovel. Associated with mail-clad knights, whose trade is war and whose delight is in combat, are men whose sacred vocation forbids the use of force altogether. Through lands overspread with deeds of violence, the lonely wayfarer with the staff and badge of a pilgrim passes unharmed and in safety. In sight of castles about whose walls fierce battles rage, are the church and the monastery, within the precincts of which quiet reigns, and all violence is branded as sacrilege. There is a like contrast when we look at the inmost spirit and temper of different classes. On the one hand there is flagrant wickedness, the very thought of which excites horror. On the other hand we meet with examples of sanctity that command in the most enlightened days the deepest reverence of all who value Christian excellence."

In order to gain impressions as clear as possible concerning the developments of this period it will be well to consider in turn several topics of interest.

I. POLITICAL CHANGES

From one point of view there is a marked difference between the secular and the sacred elements of human life. It is quite possible to be deeply interested in the former and indifferent to the latter. Yet in studying the general advance of mankind one must recognize that although easily distinguished from each other the two lines of development often coincide. In the widest outlook human life is one. Society is a unit, and it moves along a single path. History cannot concern itself with either phase of social evolution without giving consideration to the other. We cannot understand the rise and progress of Christian civilization without following the story of these centuries in both branches of human conduct. The sublime onward movement of society has always been along the parallel lines of political and moral achievement.

The political changes through which England passed during this period produced

effects which have been woven into the warp and woof of her composite national life. For two centuries there was a succession of Saxon monarchs, broken only by three short reigns of Danish kings. When we find Egbert of Wessex in 828 A. D. uniting the kingdoms of the old Heptarchy we catch the earliest glimpse of nationality north of the Channel. Then came the memorable Norman Conquest, in 1066 A. D., and a new royal line beginning with William the Conqueror. The Plantagenets, who followed, held the throne for two and a half centuries. In the course of the few centuries that followed, many plots were hatched and conflicts waged, but long before that period came to an end the unity of England had been put beyond peradventure.

At the beginning of this period the territorial limits of France were more sharply defined than those of any other section of the great empire over which Charlemagne had been crowned, yet even here all was not settled. Doubtless Charlemagne himself fancied the work of nation building fairly completed at the end of his long and efficient reign. If so, he was woefully mistaken. A succession of men of like calibre with himself, able in device and execution

on the scale of a continent, might have resisted the inevitable tendencies toward disintegration,—but he had no fit successor; and on both sides of the Rhine changes were destined to follow rapidly. His own work fairly entitles him to the term “Great,” which has been accorded to the few leaders in human affairs who have manifestly directed the course of history. He was “Great” not merely in the measure of his plans and ambitions, but in the scope of his actual accomplishments. He ranks by virtue of his achievements with Alexander and Cæsar. His conceptions of the mission to which he had been called had a grandeur which was matched only by his restless activity in behalf of a breadth of empire and a type of civilization which should be of lasting benefit to mankind. He not only led armies with skill and daring; but established schools and libraries for the spread of learning; improved the currency and in other ways aided commerce; promoted the cultivation of the land; harmonized the Roman and the barbarian codes of law; organized the army on a stable foundation; and established a naval force for the protection of the coast.

Charlemagne was immediately followed

by his son Louis the Debonair, good natured and pious, a delightful type of the Christian gentleman, not lacking in wit and training, or in courage, but of quite too kindly a disposition and of too sensitive a conscience to thoroughly master and control the conflicting elements of the age in which he lived. Only men of rugged character and iron wills, like Charles Martel and Pepin, could have carried on the enterprise which Charlemagne laid down. The Frankish-Roman Empire which the genius of his father had built into seeming unity was too unwieldy for the hands of Louis the Gentle, and his whole life was given to sad and profitless struggles with his three undutiful sons whom he had too generously associated in rulership with himself. Out of it all came not only sorrow to the Emperor, but confusion and dismemberment to the Empire. First the sons took up arms against a father of whom they were not worthy, compelling him to abdicate his throne, and breaking his heart by their unfilial harshness; and then turned their arms against each other and brought about a partition of the Empire. Within two centuries the descendants of Charlemagne had sunk into insignificance.

For long years thereafter France could scarcely be said to possess a national history. The land was so divided and subdivided between different princes and tribes that the spirit of unity hardly existed. It was "Burgundy," "Normandy," "Aquitaine," and so on to the end of the list, the vassals having small relationship to the crown, and each great baron being absorbed in the maintenance of his own independence. It was not until the reign of Louis VII., in the middle of the twelfth century, that the monarchy of France began to recover its power. It was during the two centuries of disorder that followed the death of Louis the Debonair that the ages became so profoundly "dark." This was a time of political chaos and social perturbation. In the breaking up of the Empire of Charlemagne barbarism triumphed, and all lines of development seemed hopelessly checked. Europe suffered from repeated inroads of predatory bands, the Arabs harassing the land from the south, the Slavic tribes from the east, and the Norsemen from the north. The rule of the Carlovingians developed neither strength nor dignity.

The vigorous work of Louis VII., whose individual sovereignty covered more than

forty years, was followed by that of his son, Philip Augustus, and his grandson, Louis VIII.; they in turn preparing the way for fifty years of splendid service to the nation and to mankind by Louis IX., admirable king and true saint.

The political history of Germany during this period is properly comprised under that of the Holy Roman Empire. It was ruled over by emperors who claimed as representatives of the ancient Roman Empire to be in rightful authority over all the nations of western and central Europe. They applied the term "Holy" to their administrations as political sovereigns on the ground of the interdependence of state and Church which was sealed at the coronation of Charlemagne in the Basilica of St. Peter at Rome. By the treaty of partition entered into between the sons of Louis the Debonair the Carolingian dynasty continued in the eastern part of Charlemagne's vast empire. In the course of a century or two the limits and characteristics of the Holy Roman Empire became fairly well defined, though neither in territory nor function was there entire freedom from dispute. In theory there were two sovereigns who could not come into conflict, since they

were simply the two-fold expression of the one kingdom of God. According to this construction, "God had set the Pope over the spiritual interests of the Church, and the Emperor over its temporal affairs. The Pope was to so guide and rule men's souls that they should attain to eternal life; the Emperor was to so govern their outward relations that their spiritual life should be most effectively promoted. The harmonious co-operation of these two great world-rulers, each in his own sphere, was to bring in the kingdom of God on earth. It was a beautiful thought, to which the practices of both emperors and pope often presented a sad contrast."

In spite of imperfections of character and faults of rulership on the part of both sets of potentates involved in this compact, the progress of Germany through these centuries was steadily toward distinct nationality and autonomy. At the beginning of this period, notwithstanding the apparent domination of Charlemagne, the territory of the Rhine was divided between the minor nationalities of the Thuringians, Franks, Saxons, Bavarians, and others. Through the passing centuries the German nation grew by a union of those separate national-

ities under a succession of emperors, the Saxon line holding the ascendancy for about a hundred years from the beginning of the tenth century, the Franconian and Swabian lines taking turns for a somewhat similar period, the house of Hapsburg being on the throne at the close of the thirteenth century.

II. PHASES OF CHRISTIANITY

At no time during this long and distressful period did Christianity cease to be a vital force, though some of its manifestations and activities seem to us of a later day, crude, mistaken, and wasteful. Doubtless there was a lack of breadth and farsightedness, but coherence and energy of some sort were never wanting.

There never failed some measure of direct and positive work on the part of men who had accepted a commission to evangelize the world. The word of the Gospel was carried here and there by adventurous travelers, by members of conquering armies, and by missionary monks. Before this period closed Germany and England had both become predominantly Christian. Christianity was introduced into Denmark by efforts of Louis the Debonair, and under favor of Canute, the conqueror of England.

From here it was pushed over to the coast of Sweden, captive youth having been won and instructed that they might carry back the message to their countrymen. Thence it spread to Norway, and even to Iceland and Greenland. In none of these countries was the movement a swift one. The early ideas of all these people were crude in the extreme, the "new god" being worshiped for a time together with the older ones. But in the course of decades and half-centuries their notions became more exact, their moral standards more worthy and their religious life more pronounced.

The Bulgarians coming into Europe from Central Asia adopted the Slavic language and customs and thus shut themselves out from the religious teachings of Germany and Rome. They were, however, Christianized from Constantinople and became connected with the Eastern Church.

The Moravians had a romantic history which is of special interest in view of their later distinguished service to the world. After being won to Christianity from Constantinople their country was overrun by a horde of Magyars from barbaric Asia. For a long time a fierce struggle was maintained between Christianity and the rude heathen-

ism of their conquerors, but out of it the purer religion came at last triumphant. Largely through two noble princes Christianity spread from what now became Bohemia into Poland, where it became the state religion, under the jurisdiction of Rome.

In Christianizing Prussia a characteristic method of the times was adopted, which is strongly depicted in "The Deluge," a historical novel of great power, by Sienkiewicz. In the thirteenth century an order of military knights, known as "Brethren of the Sword," subdued Livonia to Christianity by force of arms, and uniting with a similar order of German knights brought Prussia also into subjection.

The work among the Slavic people was slow and fluctuating, owing largely to differences of language. The real conquest of the Russians was finally made about the year 1000 A. D. by missionaries from Constantinople, the famous King Vladimir having been deeply impressed by the magnificence of St. Sophia. Russia has continued to this day in connection with the Eastern Church.

In Spain there was more or less friction between Mohammedans and Christians for centuries. Within the Church itself were

two parties, one seeking martyrdom and advocating bold and provocative conduct; the other holding it better to live quiet, unobtrusive lives, trusting to the inherent winsomeness and expansiveness of Christianity. About the middle of the eighth century a great outbreak and general persecution was threatened, but the Council of Cordova forbade Christians to appear before magistrates to confess the faith unless compelled by judicial procedure. So the excitement died out, and a fair degree of religious freedom was enjoyed until the Moorish power was finally broken, near the close of the eleventh century, by the Cid, the greatest warrior produced out of the long struggle between Christian and Moslem.

Various efforts at evangelization were made in the far East by the heretical Nestorians belonging to the Church in Persia, but the Tartar tribes proved wild and intractable. The Mongolian religion, with its assertions of one Almighty Creator, held them for a while against both Christianity and Mohammedanism, but finally two separate empires were established, one in Persia, where Mohammedanism triumphed, and one centering in Peking, where, strange to say, Christianity prevailed. It was

through the efforts of a devoted missionary who wisely sought to convert and train the children, that Christianity gained a foothold in China in this remote century. For eleven years his work was uninterrupted, and his hope of developing qualified native teachers and preachers rested upon a good foundation. He had won adherents and had translated the New Testament into the Tartar language, when a Chinese insurrection overwhelmed the community, dissipating the infant forces and postponing the Christianizing of this great empire for six or seven centuries.

The Crusades could have taken place only in such an age as this,—an age of ignorance and superstition, of suppressed energies, of deep devotion and chivalry. The first Crusade went out from France and Northern Italy, in the closing years of the eleventh century. It was urged on the ground that Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem had been slain by Turks, and was preached and finally led by Peter the Hermit, “an eloquent and meager-visaged pilgrim,” who everywhere aroused Christians to resent and avenge the wrongs of their brethren. Pope Urban II., who also embraced the cause, appealed to every human passion, granting absolution

and promises of blessedness hereafter to all participants. The offers of reward added to a body of sincere devotees a host of criminals set free for the service, and also of adventurers who were moved by the hope of booty. The disorderly mob marching through Bulgaria filled the country with robbery and murder, and were in turn slaughtered by thousands upon the uprising of the inhabitants. The remnant reached Constantinople, but were nearly all destroyed in their march through Asia Minor. A hundred thousand men had already perished when the Duke of Lorraine, the famous Godfrey de Boullion, marched toward Constantinople with a host of well-appointed knights. With various adventures and countless sufferings this army appeared before the walls of Jerusalem, carried it by storm and wreaked vengeance on both Saracens and Jews. A new kingdom was set up on the plan of western feudalism. But it was necessary to sustain many encounters with infidels, and as the years went by the condition of the kingdom at the Holy City became exceedingly precarious.

The second Crusade was instituted by the kings of Germany and France in 1147, being stirred up by St. Bernard, abbot of Clair-

vaux, in the hope of saving the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of the infidels, the powerful Sultan of Mosul having taken Edessa and threatened Jerusalem. Bernard succeeded in arousing slumbering zeal for religion by his fiery eloquence and pious enthusiasm, but the ultimate result was untold hardship and sacrifice and the loss of countless lives. It was a vast blunder on the part of a really noble and useful man.

The third Crusade came forty years later when Jerusalem had fallen into the hands of Saladin. Frederick I. of Germany, Philip of France, and Richard of England went in joint expedition to the rescue of the Holy City. "From the southernmost point of Italy to the rude mountains of Scandinavia" streamed forth armed bands toward Palestine. The cost of the enterprise was great in treasure, sufferings and human lives, on both sides, and the result was a truce by which residence on the sea coast from Tyre to Joppa and access to the holy places were secured to the Christians.

The fourth Crusade was undertaken in 1204 by knights of France and Italy who were lured eastward by hope of material gains, and who succeeded in dividing among themselves the spoils of the Byzantine King-

dom; but the expedition was without results so far as Jerusalem was concerned.

The fifth Crusade is famous as having been undertaken by Frederick II. of Germany while under the ban of excommunication from the Pope, Gregory IX. It terminated in a favorable treaty with the Saracens. The Pope, who had forbidden Christian warriors to follow the Emperor, now fulminated a decree of excommunication against the city and the holy sepulchre, so that Frederick was compelled to place upon his own head the crown of Jerusalem without the solemnity of a mass. On his return there ensued a protracted contest in Germany between the imperial and papal forces, which ended in the withdrawal of the ban and the bestowal of the papal benediction upon Frederick.

The last two Crusades were led by the devoted but mistaken Louis IX., the only sainted ruler that ever sat upon the throne of France. The results were of smallest consequence, beyond the contribution of thousands of bodies to the soil of Syria, which "for two hundred years had been drenched by the blood of so many millions."

The Crusades were costly beyond estimate in treasure and in human lives, and seem to

modern thought irrational and even unchristian. Yet they served a great purpose in advancing the cause of civilization in a rude and unprogressive age. While they moved many to gloomy fanaticism, they yet awakened multitudes to religious zeal, besides adding to the treasure and prestige of the Church. Indirectly they opened the minds of men to cultivation through acquaintance with foreign lands and the arts and sciences of other peoples. The knightly class was doubtless ennobled by the romantic aims which called them forth in a spirit of chivalry and devotion to the Cross. But what was of still greater importance, a free peasantry arose out of liberties won at such great sacrifice, and new lines of trade and commerce were opened for the ultimate enrichment of many towns and cities of the West.

This period is marked by the development of several great orders of monks. The tendencies toward a monastic life had declared themselves ten centuries before, but circumstances favored the highest development of such organizations during the middle ages. Often they originated in true piety and pure zeal for religion and service to humanity. There was a combined pres-

sure from ambition for spiritual culture, and from the manifest needs of the people in a rough and tumultuous age. Men retired from the enjoyments and engagements of ordinary life, subjecting themselves to strictest rules, and giving their daily ministrations to the ignorant who needed instruction and exhortation and to the sick and destitute who suffered from the lack of bodily comforts.

Among these orders were the Dominicans, who braved many hardships for the poor, winning by their self-denying labors immense popularity throughout Italy, Spain, France and Germany, and finally forcing their way into the great universities of Bologna, Paris and Oxford. X Side by side with them grew up the order of the Franciscans, whose members went out to conquer the world for Christ by kindly service and the simple preaching of the Gospel. At first they were full of the enthusiasm and mysticism of their founder, but in the end, as with the Dominicans, the order becoming possessed of great wealth, relaxed the rigid rules of early days, and came under the domination of ambitious men whose purposes were remote from the devotion and piety suggested by the life of their Master.

Belonging to these times and to this order of religious life there are two notable characters which illustrate the sincerity and benevolence of true Christianity even in such an age as this.

The first of these, who has come to be known as St. Bernard, or "Bernard of Clairvaux," was one of the most remarkable men of his time. He was born in 1091 A. D., near Dijon, of a family distinguished for bravery, justice, and kindness to the poor. His father was a knight and a vassal of the Duke of Burgundy; his mother, a woman of strong religious character, had great influence over her son. A thoughtful youth, at the age of twenty-two he joined the Cistercians, along with thirty companions, including four of his brothers. He began preaching with such tremendous effectiveness that, "Mothers hid their sons, wives their husbands, and companions their friends, lest they should be led away captive by his persuasive eloquence." The Cistercian monastery of Citeaux had attracted his attention by its reported austerities, and he there entered into severest self-subjection, abstaining from food, giving himself to menial service, and spending hours in devotion. The monastery grew in

numbers and wealth, and within a few years he was sent out to found in a wild, secluded valley the monastery of Clairvaux with which his name will be forever associated. His life was fruitful in literary and ecclesiastical activities. He was incessantly engaged in preaching and correspondence, and became in some respects the most influential man of his age.

A century later, namely, in 1182 A. D., was born a man of different antecedents and gifts, who also became the founder of a great monastic order. Francis of Assisi, who has been, as justly as any man, canonized by the Church, was the son of a rich merchant in a village of northern Italy. His father would gladly have trained him to the pursuits of trade. Through the years of youth and early manhood he was the head of a club of gay companions, and was as reckless as any. There was in him, however, with all his frivolity, an undercurrent of seriousness and upward impulses which he could not suppress. A severe sickness was followed by a pronounced transformation of character and life, with an ever deepening sincerity, devoutness and humility. He parted with every worldly possession, gave himself to meditation, austerities

and to the devoted care of the sick and needy. He drew about him a band of earnest followers, whom he sent out two by two as preachers of repentance, wearing coarse gray tunics, literally without money, and cheerfully accepting the meanest lodgings and the simplest food. In 1209, by consent of the Pope, he formed an order upon vows of chastity, poverty and obedience, with no purpose to retire from the world, but to enter it and make conquest of it for Christ. Its peculiarity was its *continual* poverty, for not only could no friar hold property, but possessions were also forbidden to monasteries.

Scholasticism tended to break up the mental stagnation of the dark ages, and although it would be out of place and unproductive in this modern period, it was full of energy and fruitfulness in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It sprang in part out of sources of learning to which European people had finally gained access, and in part out of the awakening of mental activities incidental to a progressive social and religious life. The learning of the Arabic schools of Spain, especially in mathematics, astronomy and medicine; and the imperishable literature of ancient Greece became the inheritance of

the western mind through the new intercourse of nations. At the same time men of religious power were inclined to apply reason to theology by way of systematizing and vindicating it. The motto of Scholasticism was, "Faith seeking knowledge," and its standing declaration was that philosophy is the handmaid of religion; and that it is capable of demonstrating the reasonableness of convictions derived from other sources. Working along these lines the schoolmen were active in study and debate, and added not a little to the stock of human thought. Some of them manifested great acuteness and dialectic skill. The older universities at Athens, Alexandria and Constantinople had passed away, but under the auspices of the Church and the favor of monarchs new schools were built up. The University of Paris, "Mother of Universities," grew up in the twelfth century, gradually broadening its course from theology to include the liberal arts, medicine and law. Not long after was founded the University of Oxford. It was at such centers of learning that doctors of scholastic divinity lectured to throngs of eager listeners.

Earnest men like Thomas Aquinas, Duns

Scotus and Anselm, discussed such themes as the Being of God, the Incarnation, the Trinity, the Relation of Faith to Reason. There was an indulgence in refinements and abstruseness distasteful to modern thinkers, and sometimes a literalness of interpretation absurd and barren; still they enunciated some germinal thoughts which were to find development in later ages. For instance, as against the hard and judicial theories of the atonement, Abelard suggested the "moral view" of Christ's work as a manifestation of divine mercy fitted to melt the heart of the sinner and win him to a saved life. Out of the mazes of thought came also the scholastic doctrine of "Justification" as being primarily the "infusion of personal righteousness," or the making man in himself holy according to the first demand of moral law. In the same way emphasis was laid on the need of a "living faith," by which the soul is knit to God in fellowship with Christ,—as distinguished from a merely formal or intellectual credence.

It was almost a matter of course that the schoolmen should in an age of crudeness fall into errors; and, indeed, some of their errors have plagued the Church ever since; such errors, for instance, as the efficacy of

baptism, transubstantiation, the miraculous effect of the mass, plenary indulgences from special acts, extreme unction for the dying, and the moral worth of celibacy.

In spite, however, of such errors of thought the ranks of scholastics furnished some shining examples of Christian character and demonstrate the vitality of religion even in so rude an age. One of the earliest was Anselm, born in Lombardy in 1033. He was tenderly nurtured by a pious mother, but the harshness of an unchristian father drove him from home. He became a monk in Normandy, and at the age of sixty reluctantly accepted the Archbishopric of Canterbury, England. He was distinguished for mildness of temper, inflexibility of conscience and for addiction to profound meditations, which he would not forego even on enforced travels. He died in 1109.

Abelard, of romantic history, born in 1079, presents a character both strong and winsome. Educated in the schools of Paris, he became established there as a teacher at the age of thirty-six, and won to his lectures crowds of enthusiastic young men. His course was interrupted by a passionate attachment to the young Heloise, who returned his devoted affection. The mar-

riage was kept a secret lest his ecclesiastic preferment should be hindered. A little later he was brutally attacked by Fulbert, the uncle of Heloise, and was driven out to a solitary cabin in a retired place where multitudes of students flocked to him. Heloise was compelled to take the veil, and Abelard, after some years in a monastery in Brittany, returned at the age of sixty to resume his work at Paris, as a teacher.

He maintained a high character and a broad standard of thought, but was finally banished for alleged heresies. In the famous monastery of Clugny, on the borders of Burgundy, the poor hunted man found a refuge. A year afterward, namely, in 1142, he died at the neighboring priory of St. Marcellus. The bones of Abelard and the ill-fated Heloise rest in a common tomb in the Cemetery of Père la Chaise, in Paris.

Thomas Aquinas, born near Naples in 1225, was another man of lofty character and attainments for the age in which he lived. He studied at Cologne, and afterwards taught there, as well as at Paris and Bologna. His most important work, "the Sum of All Theology," is still cherished by the Catholic Church as the greatest of theological teachings. All his lectures and even every

bit of writing was begun with prayer, and in hours of perplexity he made sincere application to God for light.

A little later (1235) was born on the Island of Majorca, Raymond Lull, a scientific scholar, a profound theologian, a man of extensive travel, of abounding labors and of devoted piety. Although all his life he had maintained vigorous opposition to the pantheistic philosophy which had come down from the schools of the Saracens, he labored with unwearied zeal for the conversion of the Saracens themselves and finally fell a victim to a fanatical mob in Algiers, whither he had gone on his apostolic mission.

It is interesting to find developing out of this period of limitations and confusions, but of vital faith, the sublime architecture of the Church. Under necessity for greater space two arms were thrown out from the nave of the basilica, and so unwittingly the ground-plan a cross was made. Then came the uplifting of the roof for height and beauty, appearing as Byzantine in the East, and Romanesque in the West, and in northern Europe developing into the Norman ornamented arch of which Durham Cathedral furnishes an example. Finally, toward

the close of the twelfth century the Gothic type with its pointed arch was matured, within a hundred years reaching its fullest excellence in delicacy and majesty. Great cathedrals were begun in Northern France, Great Britain, and Germany, some of which were not to be finished for many centuries. Upon these vast buildings not only kings and nobles lavished their gifts, but the people also their multiplied offerings, making possible these sublime undertakings. The marvel of beauty and sublimity in these Christian temples is set forth in a descriptive passage from the pen of Cardinal Newman: "The fair form of Christianity rose up and grew and expanded like a beautiful pageant, from north to south; it was majestic, solemn, bright, it was beautiful and pleasant, it was soothing to the griefs, it was indulgent to the hopes of man; it was at once a teaching and a worship; it had a dogma, a mystery, a ritual of its own; it had a hierarchical form. A brotherhood of holy pastors, with mitre and crosses, and uplifted hand, walked forth and blessed and ruled a joyful people. The crucifix headed the procession, and simple monks were there with hearts in prayer, and sweet chants resounded, and the holy Latin tongue was

heard, and boys came forth in white, swinging censers, and the fragrant cloud arose, and mass was sung, and the saints were invoked; and day after day, and in the still night, and over the woody hills and in the quiet plains, as constantly as sun and moon and stars go forth in heaven, so regular and solemn was the stately march of blessed services on earth, high festival and gorgeous procession and soothing dirge and passing bell, and the familiar evening call to prayer."

The development of Church architecture was in accordance with the maturing of ecclesiastic tendencies. Some of the great movements of this period originated apart from priestly inspirations, yet all the time there was immense activity within the organized Church. Through the centuries there was a persistent, calculating, powerful effort to make the Church dominant in the personal, social and political affairs of all Europe. Some of those who came to the papal throne were weak and wicked; not a few were shrewd and forceful; a smaller number were sincere and devoted. On the whole there was much to mar the record of formal Christianity, much that was frightfully out of keeping with the character and

methods of the Master. But the sad chapters have been written, and must be read by any one who would understand the drift and the struggles of this and of later periods. ✓

In return for his defense of Church institutions popes gave Charlemagne their oaths of allegiance, and accepted from him admonitions as to duty, and even instruction as to doctrine—always keeping in abeyance, however, schemes for ecclesiastical aggrandizement. The successors of the great Emperor, though attempting to exercise the same influence in church affairs, had weaker hands, and the Pontiffs took advantage of every disorder to assert their own independence, and even to meddle with imperial politics and with the administration of justice; their authority often defying that of the secular courts. At the same time the appeal of various emperors to papal sanction for some personal advantage tended to fortify their claims to jurisdiction in temporal affairs.

✓The whole movement of the age, conscious and unconscious, was toward papal supremacy. Pious people hoped for much from the authority of the Church, as expressed through its official head. Especially did they look to it to subdue factious

disturbers. Attempts were therefore made to build up in the minds of men a reverence for its divinely constituted organization. Editors of ecclesiastical laws strove to add the dignity and authority of ancient tradition to the claims by which the successor of St. Peter held his high office. Some of the forgeries were clumsy and stand self-condemned by their patent anachronisms; but that was an uncritical age, and the documents passed for the time unchallenged. Their whole aim was to establish the priesthood as supreme and as free from secular control; and to this end there was set forth in these forged decretals a system of graded orders,—priests, bishops and metropolitans,—up to the Primate, without whose sanction no verdict could stand. The most ambitious claims of scheming pontiffs were set forth in spurious letters and decrees, to which the venerated names of early bishops were attached.

At the same time the influence of the clergy was greatly enhanced on the political side by reason of the feudal system of which many ecclesiastics took advantage. Bishops were made counts and dukes, and so were enabled to exercise within their dioceses the privileges and powers of secular

lords, and were occasionally as guilty as they of violence and intrigue.

At times the Pope came into open conflict with the emperor, and not unfrequently the result was the humiliation of the supreme Pontiff; yet in great crises success generally rested with the representative of the Church. Henry IV. of Germany was compelled to cross the Alps to Canossa in dead of winter, and in the garb of a penitent appeal for clemency at the feet of Gregory VII. A hundred years later the great Frederick I. was forced to bow at the feet of Pope Alexander, to be raised from the ground only by permission of the gracious Pontiff. The struggle of Frederick II. to subjugate the Pope, overthrow the whole hierarchical system and bring the Church back to the simplicity of the apostles,—as he put it,—was fierce and prolonged; but he was too far in advance of an age in which the idea prevailed that the Church must be a world-power, and his efforts were fruitless. The Pope pushed the implacable warfare not only up to the death of the monarch who had been the “wonder of the world,” but also against the son who succeeded him. All the popes accepted the argument which gave them authority in temporal matters.

They reasoned that if as successors of St. Peter they had the power of the "keys of heaven" very much more had they the right to administer earthly affairs, and so they asserted in broadest terms the claims of Rome to subordinate all secular interests to her jurisdiction. In the motives of the various pontiffs there was a mixture of craft, hardness and pride, with much sincere devotion to an institution which stood for right and religion. Innocent III., "the greatest in the long line of popes," in whose reign the papacy reached the very summit of its power, maintained that the "crowns of kings and the destinies of nations were lodged by divine decree" in the hands of the Pope.

× As at the adoption of Christianity by Constantine, and at the crowning of Charlemagne in the basilica at Rome, this period, which closed in the acknowledgment of papal supremacy, presents a peculiar problem to the student of history. Was it to the advantage or disadvantage of Christian civilization that there should have been such a centralization of power in the Roman Church?

× On the unfavorable side it is to be said that the system put human nature to too great a strain, the very best of the popes

becoming proud, autocratic and persistent. It is to be recognized also that the opportunities for gaining wealth and influence tempted bad men to scheme for office, and having secured it to abuse it scandalously. And, further, it seriously disturbed the free and independent action of responsible officials in the city and state.

On the favorable side are two results most difficult to secure in such a broken condition as prevailed throughout Europe, but which were the actual products of this huge ecclesiastical system; they were unity in the Church, and social stability. The times were troublous for all institutions, and it is possible that if the Church had been divided into separate national branches it might have been submerged beneath political contentions and national changes. The strength and steadiness of so great a body proved its safety, and tided it over to more settled times. This is the conclusion of Guizot, a philosophical student of history and a Protestant. "If Christianity had been no more than a belief, a sentiment, an individual conviction, it would have sunk amidst the dissolution of the Empire and the invasion of barbarians." This was certainly its fate in Asia and North Africa, where it was

swept under by the tide of Mohammedanism
“A society strongly organized and strongly
governed was indispensable” to a success-
ful struggle against repeated disasters. “It
was the Church that saved Christianity, it
was the Church with its institutions, its
magistrates and its power that became the
bond, the medium and principle of civiliza-
tion between the Roman and the Teutonic
worlds.”

CHAPTER V

LOOKING TOWARD REFORMATION

Writing of the unsettled condition of society during the middle ages Guizot says: "It was the barbarian epoch; it was the chaos of all elements, the infancy of all systems, a universal turmoil in which even strife was not permanent and systematic." To an observer going back from our own fruitful century it was the day of misrule and of perversion. The Christianity which ought to have been dominant for good appeared outwardly in the supremacy of a huge ecclesiastical organization, itself overtopped by a ruthless potentate. In every struggle up to the close of the thirteenth century the papacy had been successful. Fearful contests had been waged even within the lines of the Holy Roman Empire, and in every instance the issue had been to the seeming advantage of the Pope. Henry IV. and Frederick I. and II. had been worthy and powerful emperors, but after persistent opposition to ecclesiastical demands from Rome they had in turn to cross the Alps and kneel

as suppliants for forgiveness and absolution. But at the beginning of the fourteenth century we discover the play of new forces in society, all adverse to the papal domination, and favorable to freedom and development in both Church and state.

Physicians of the present enlightened age depend upon the *vis medicatrix naturæ*, asking only that life may be prolonged while the operation of the natural forces makes for recovery. So in the composite life of humanity there are vital forces which in the slow process of time, work toward convalescence. In the healing of society, not even is careful nursing required, for however deep-seated the disease preying upon social life, it will ultimately exhaust itself, and in due time the process of repair will begin. This is a beneficent provision of nature. As the marred tree throws out new tissues to protect itself from the waste of vital sap; as the wounded animal recovers uncared for in his forest lair; as a human being mends at the turn of the fever, so society, wounded by cruel oppressions and poisoned by influences morally impure waits for a passing crisis and then enters on the path of recovery.

During the centuries that intervened be-

tween the earlier order of things, under the Grecian and Roman types of government and civilization and the new order of things when modern ideas began to prevail, there were gigantic wrongs and abuses. But as we come to the close of the thirteenth century we are conscious that they have nearly run their course, that mankind is beginning to recognize the causes of evil, and to struggle toward a freer and healthier condition of social life.

An illustration of this natural process of regeneration is found in the collapse of feudalism. In its conflict with the rights of kings and the claims of popes it suffered many a defeat, giving way at last before the political progress of the whole commonwealth, and the growing manhood of those who had been dependants of the castle-lord. This occurred again and again when a king overstepped his bounds and struck at the rights of the governed; as, for instance, when the barons of England wrung the Magna Charta from the tyrant John.

It is precisely this natural process which the student of history follows with delight from the end of the thirteenth to the beginning of the sixteenth century, when the result has become no longer doubtful. Dur-

ing this fascinating period latent forces and hidden movements come to light, and we discover that even while evil and designing men were congratulating themselves on the success of their schemes for the completer subjection of the masses, the minds, consciences and hearts of the so-called lower orders were really being quickened for the overthrow of the evil system by virtue of which their oppressors were in power. All these outworkings of human society were as normal as the unfolding of a flower or the evolution of a higher type of animal life.

There was, for instance, a growing spirit of nationality which was quite at variance with the Pope's assumed right to interfere in the affairs of people living hundreds of leagues from Rome. Government became more and more centralized, and the process by which since the beginning of time great nations have been built around a central authority went on beyond the English Channel and on both sides of the Rhine. This sense of autonomy grew with the development of a new idea of monarchy. The division of the territory among feudal lords had proved to be greatly to the disadvantage of the people, and they were becoming more and more ready to acknowledge the King

and uphold his authority. Now, as we shall see, the King and the Pope did not readily come to terms. There was an irrepressible conflict between them which in many lands lessened the papal sway, and in one great nation issued in an irrepressible schism with the Romish hierarchy.

There were certain other developments which in subtle ways tended to undermine the power of the Pontiff. Owing to the growth of cities and the swiftly moving currents of municipal life society was not so easily influenced by papal bans and proscriptions; upspringing commerce aroused the energies and diverted the sentiments of many from the exercises of religion which the Church, often with hard and selfish calculation, had turned to her own account. Personal independence was developed, also, by the great increase of intelligence, and the awakening of all the faculties by which men give free and bold consideration to the problems of life and to the rights of humanity.

The story of this period flows on without interruption. The character and conduct of the popes tended more and more to awaken shame, calling the attention of great leaders to the inconsistency of such lives with the claims of the Gospel of Christ, and

spreading distrust more and more widely among the people. At the same time, in blind folly, ecclesiastic leaders rushed into fruitless controversies with political powers. The fourteenth century opens with Boniface VIII. newly come to office and inclined like Gregory VII. and Innocent III. to make the Church absolute in all the affairs of mankind. He was ready to manipulate political forces everywhere in order to further his own schemes for the aggrandizement of the Church of Rome. He meddled with affairs in Sicily, and interfered in the dispute between Philip the Fair of France and Edward I. of England, but succeeded only in arousing opposition. He attempted to compel recognition by cutting off sources of revenue, forbidding the taxation of ecclesiastics. Philip resisted the attack on his kingly authority, and retorted with an edict forbidding the exportation of gold and silver from his realm without the royal sanction, while in Edward's kingdom protection was withdrawn from the clergy who obeyed the Pope's demand, bringing them speedily to terms. Changing front, Boniface acted for the time simply as an unofficial individual, and attempted to arbitrate between the two kings; but Philip was dissatisfied with the

award and consequently received at his court princes of Italy who were in hostility to the Pope, being sustained in every movement by able lawyers, who resisted the encroachments of the papacy and buttressed the crown in its prerogatives.

After four years had passed Boniface found new ground for a fierce attack on the French monarch, and issued a decree that made salvation depend on the belief that every one is subject to the Pope. The clergy of France were summoned to Rome to sit in judgment on the rebellious King. The days of humiliation for earthly potentates, however, were over, and Philip promptly retaliated by forbidding them to leave his realm, and later by sending messengers to heap insults upon the Pope. The utter failure of all his efforts to subjugate these kings of earth to his sway brought to the aged Pontiff the deepest chagrin, and did not a little to hasten his death. His whole administration had been a pitiable failure, and gave rise and currency to the epigram: "He came in like a fox, reigned like a lion, and died like a dog."

This was more than a personal failure, for it stirred up the learned everywhere to consider the whole question of the relation of

the Church to the state; and while the supremacy of the Pope was maintained by rigid churchmen, the notion was gaining adherents that the spiritual and temporal powers are distinct and independent, each alike being ordained of God, and that the king therefore has in civil matters no superior. Dante wrote in defence of the rule of one for the good of the many, maintaining that in order to enjoy peace, justice, liberty, men must unite under a monarch. To this end the Pope ought to limit his prerogatives to the guidance of men's souls, leaving to emperors the exclusive concern for temporal affairs. The book naturally had the greatest influence in Italy, but it provoked earnest discussion elsewhere, especially in Germany, where the foundation of civil authority was under consideration.

In the reign of the second successor from Boniface VIII. we come to an event of moment. The new Pope forsook Rome for Avignon, on the borders of France, and began what, because of this foreign residence, became known as "The Babylonian Captivity." From this time the prestige of the papacy declined as rapidly as it had risen, for in its new habitation it became really enslaved to France and was administered in

her interests. Pope Clement V. stood out before all Europe as the embodiment of degrading subserviency. With reference to elections and political movements in Germany, England and other Catholic countries, he was bold and aggressive, but toward France, his master, he was cringing and abject.

After Clement came John XXII., who had no end of troubles, both political and ecclesiastical. He came into conflict with the King of Bavaria, whom he anathematized; and then had his bans laughed at in Germany, and disregarded by the electors whom he had summoned with highest papal authority to depose the King and elect a successor. At the same time he was in open rupture with the Franciscans, who, with all their mistakes and limitations, were representatives of a pure and benevolent type of Christianity, and were generally held in highest esteem. The result of this contest was a treatise by one of the greatest Franciscan scholars of the age, in which it was declared that the unity of the Church is to be found in Christ and not in any single primate, and it is added that the only infallibility in matters of faith and morals is to be found in the Holy Scriptures.

Other powerful writings were called out in which were given a history of papal pretensions and a repudiation of the claims so long made for temporal jurisdiction. The supreme authority of the state was set forth, as constituted by the whole body of citizens. They were affirmed to have the power to elect their own ruler and to summon their own council for the determination of difficult questions. The sole function of the priesthood was defined to be the teaching of the truths of Scripture, and the administration of the sacraments; and the pretensions of those self-styled successors to the supremacy of Peter were set over against the simplicity of the Church of the apostles. The world is not startled to-day by such ideas, but at that time they were not only new but revolutionary. They were scattered as seed from the hand of the sower, to lodge in the minds of men, and in due time to bring forth an abundant harvest.

The successors of John at Avignon continued his policy of undisguised hostility to the various political parties in Germany and to religious thinkers everywhere. They raised revenues by extortion and usurpation, and thereby maintained their courts in luxury and profligacy, as is vividly de-

picted by so observant an eye-witness as Petrarch.

Across the channel there was growing up a spirit of resistance to the papacy, which was naturally increased by its marked subserviency to the interests of France. Edward III., one of the noblest of English sovereigns, issued two significant edicts, the first being to the effect that it devolved upon the king to fill Church offices, and the second declaring that his subjects were not to make direct appeal to any foreign tribunal in any matter which fell under the king's jurisdiction. These notable decrees put the Pope to great straits, inasmuch as his ally, the King of France, was unable to furnish him support and protection.

The so-called Babylonian captivity lasted, as the Jewish one had done, about seventy years. In 1377 the Pope returned to Rome, where in the following years his successor, Urban VI., was elected. Urban at once broke with France by refusing to betake himself to Avignon; whereupon the college of cardinals at Anagni elected a new pope, declaring the election of Urban invalidated on account of violence. Now begins the story of an absurd, not to say disgraceful, divi-

sion of the infallible authority of the head of the Roman Church, for Urban immediately created a new college of twenty-eight cardinals, making confusion worse confounded. The appeal to the various powers of Europe in these schismatic divisions was made not to the sense of justice, but rather to the political feelings of the various European powers, by which alone their attitude was determined. Germany, Italy, England and Flanders sided with Urban, while France, Scotland and Spain supported the Pope of the second election.

The schism went on from year to year, from decade to decade, to the unspeakable shame of the Roman Church. There were two claimants for the transmitted supremacy of St. Peter, each assuming to be clothed with absolute and righteous authority and each bitterly hostile to the other. In course of time each pope had a worthy successor, and a new generation became the inheritor of trouble and scandal. Various efforts were made to heal the breach. The great university of Paris undertook to devise some way out of the embarrassment, but in vain. Each pope, with the backing of his own college of cardinals, professed to be conscientiously convinced of the righteousness of

his cause and therefore unable to make concessions.

When matters could become no worse a general council was summoned, which met at Pisa in March, 1409. It represented most of the catholic countries. Its first work was to depose the schismatic popes and unite the rival colleges of cardinals. Many in the council wished to reform the church "in head and members," in order to put an end to ecclesiastical corruption and the abuse of papal power; but the majority had been educated to the idea of papal supremacy and questioned the right of the Council to go further in the matter of reform except under the leadership of a new pope. The conservative party was supported by many of the cardinals, who feared that the movement would become revolutionary. Accordingly an election was held as the first legitimate step toward the needed reforms, but no sooner was the new Pope in office, than he was beset by a horde of claimants for the benefices at his disposal. Regarding these gifts as the legitimate spoils of office, he rejoiced in the distribution of favors, and kept putting off the reform party until a great opportunity was lost. In consequence of this failure at reform things

ran on in the old way for another century. A few important concessions were indeed made, and some specious promises went upon record, but the Council was dissolved without opportunity for mature deliberation on the terrible exigencies of the time.

Moreover, absurd as it may appear, the old schism went on without a break, save that now instead of two rival popes there were three. The new Pope, who had been chosen to head a reform movement, fell under the influence of a cardinal who had begun life as a pirate, and who had only so far reformed as to wear the red hat. This prince of schemers succeeded at last, though with as great a number of crimes laid to his charge as to that of any successor, in placing himself in the seat originally vacated by the martyrdom of the apostle Peter.

With all his hardihood this new Pope, John XXIII., could not maintain absolute control against conflicting forces, and was compelled to yield to the demand for another general Council, which, however, he planned to control in his own interests. The Council was one of note. It met at Constance, November, 1414. Earnest men in its membership were eager to put an instant end to the schism and the scandals

of the Church, and toward this conclusion came no small pressure from the work of such leaders of thought as John Wyclif among the dead, and John Hus among the living. The Council was protracted from the fall of 1414 to the spring of 1418, and was "the most brilliant and imposing of the ecclesiastical assemblies of the middle ages." There were hosts of bishops, doctors, and jurists, besides an unexampled array of sovereigns and nobles. To these constituent elements of the great body were added not fewer than fifty thousand people drawn by various motives to the city to witness the proceedings.

The pirate Pope, the latest claimant for pontifical honors, thought to secure first of all a confirmation of the Pisa Council, held five years before, which deposed his two rivals, and then to occupy the time of the Council with consideration of the dangerous heresies of Hus and Wyclif, thus baffling any serious attempts at reform. He failed ignominiously. His plans fell to the ground, and he became a terrified fugitive. In a few months he was solemnly deposed from office. Not long after this, one of his rivals gave up the struggle and resigned, leaving only the obstinate Benedict as Pope *de facto*.

The Council made fruitless efforts to negotiate with the incumbent, but ended by a formal deposition, thus bringing to a close a schism which had perplexed and disgraced the Church for thirty years.

It required no small energy to bring this to pass; but still there was reserved sufficient force to deal rigorously with the heretics of Bohemia. Hus came at their call, under the safe conduct of Emperor Sigismund, and with assurances that he would be given a fair hearing against all accusers. It has seldom been considered necessary to keep faith with heretics; the promises of fair dealing went for nothing, and Hus was compelled to await in prison the issue of the mock trial. The Council had some difficulty in hitting upon just the statement of Hus which would furnish plausible ground for condemnation, but at last they planted themselves on his denial of supreme authority to the Church, although he had supported his views with reverent appeals to the Scriptures. The reform party might go so far as to dethrone a pope who disgraced his office, but they still stood firmly by the doctrine of hierarchical authority. The climax was reached when with mob-like violence, in strong contrast with the noble serenity of their victim,

the Council condemned Hus to be burnt at the stake.

Returning to the regular business in hand, the Council proceeded to the election of a pope whose solitary grandeur was to make good that of his three co-ordinate predecessors. The somewhat prolonged process resulted in the elevation to high office of an Italian, Martin V., who was speedily found to be strenuous in maintaining the supremacy of papal authority and in combating all attempts at reform of abuses. It remained, therefore, for the Council to pass some resolutions, and to adjourn with the conviction established in the minds of all earnest men that the attempt had been on the whole a stupendous failure, and that deeper and more radical work was needed for the real purification of the Church.

The new Pope sought, with some show of success, to regain prerogatives in France and in the Roman states, but altogether failed in England. In Bohemia he found that the Hussite movement, in spite of the leader's martyrdom, had gained considerable headway, a powerful party going even further than Hus, in demanding full communion for the laity, denying transubstantiation, and rejecting any authority which

claimed superiority to that of Scripture. Opposition had carried their enthusiasm over to fanaticism, making them stubborn in resistance to popery.

As usual in such cases, Bohemia was ravaged with war; but the heretics remained unsubdued. The fruitlessness of persecution led to the calling of the Council of Basel. The Bohemians were invited to a free discussion, and thus was secured by guile what violence had failed to win; for the discussion resulted in certain concessions on the part of the Church, which unhappily divided the Bohemians into two fiercely antagonistic parties on the question of accepting these compromises. The Council having thus thrown into the hostile camp an apple of discord, continued its own existence for some years with violent dissentions and in conflict with the Pope, dissolving at last in 1449, to the immense relief of all parties concerned.

The Jubilee Year, 1450, found Rome crowded by bands of holy pilgrims. On the papal throne sat Nicholas V., aged and broken, but full of plans for strengthening the pontifical authority in Rome and throughout the lands of the Church. He had erected fortresses here and there; had

collected a vast number of manuscripts (founding indeed the Vatican Library); and had attempted in various ways to make Rome the missionary of culture to Europe; hoping by the combination of force and learning to regain the prestige of the hierarchy. But Rome was unappreciative and broke out into open rebellion; while in the East Constantinople, his hoped-for ally, fell into the hands of the unspeakable Turk; so that all his projects for giving strength and stability to the papal power came to naught, leaving him only two years of embittered life.

Succeeding popes made attempts in the same direction, but the moral force of the papacy was no longer potent. It had been too long fatally untrue to its trust. Rival kings and princes refused to harmonize their differences at its bidding, and the infidel invader threatened the borders of Christendom without arousing the ardor of resistance and the union of sentiments displayed in the days of the Crusades. Religious feelings and motives had ceased to have sway over the hearts of men, and the high officials of the Church were unwilling to recover ground in the only possible way, by repentance and genuine reform.

Sixtus IV., who came to the throne with the beginning of the last third of the century, recognized the weakness of the papacy, but like his predecessors failed to give it moral grandeur and righteous influence, contenting himself with fierce endeavors to add to the material resources of the Church, and to enrich relatives and personal friends. The result of his policy was a dozen years of contentions, bickerings and warfare, ending only with his death, which was hastened by the failure of his undertakings.

The dozen succeeding years under the misnamed Innocent VIII. were, by reason of trickery and truckling, years of peace for Italy, but of unprofitableness for the Church. He was succeeded by Cardinal Borgia, of unsavory fame, who became Pope with the title of Alexander VI. He went back to Sixtus for his policy, and succeeded in reducing the papacy to the level of the other Italian principalities, while he demonstrated his willingness to barter the welfare of the country for his own advantage and the exaltation of the Borgia family. The new century, which was to be marked with the most significant event since the coming of Christ, opened with this man still on the throne, disgracing even its bad record with

a personal character and a sensual court which were alike held in general horror.

The incumbents of the papal chair for the following years showed no improvement on the Borgia type. The attention of the Pontiff was given to ceaseless intrigue, diplomacy, and warfare, now with this Power and now with that. Florence, Venice, Milan, and Naples of the Italian states; France, Spain, England and Germany of the great powers were all involved in turn, and poor Italy was subject to the depredations of one invader after another. In 1506 A. D., nearly at the end of this period, Julius II. laid the foundation of St. Peter's church and summoned Michael Angelo to decorate the walls of the Sistine Chapel with frescoes, and Raphael to immortalize with his genius the walls of the Vatican. The autocratic Pope was, at least, a patron of the arts; but the cardinals, wearied with his warfare and worn out by his belligerent temper, turned at his death to the son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, mild of temper and fond of music, art and literature. He had been made cardinal at the tender age of thirteen, and now, at thirty-seven, was exalted to highest office as Leo X. He was happily free from the evil devices of his

immediate predecessors, but was devoted to unreligious studies, to hunting, and to pageants. Of him it was wittily said that his learning and fine tastes would have made of him a perfect pope,—if he had combined with these attainments some knowledge of religious matters and some inclination to piety.

The period antecedent to the Reformation closes with this Pope at Rome; with Henry VIII. in England, and Wolsey just raised to the Cardinalate; with Francis I., young and ambitious, upon the throne of France; with Germany under Emperor Maximilian vainly endeavoring to quiet the peasants, whose hardships almost goaded them to despair, and to harmonize the jealous, conflicting princes; with the Turk pressing upon the borders of this central nation, and with the whole European world on the verge of the greatest outbreak which had ever threatened the organization of the Church.

We have followed the significant events in the history of the Church for the two centuries preceding the Lutheran Reformation, but our understanding of the influences which led to that mighty movement will not be complete without emphasizing two of the greatest factors in this mighty upheaval.

The first of these is covered by the historical term, the "Revival of Learning," and the second by the names of a half dozen great leaders of thought.

To turn first, then, to the intellectual side of this nascent period of reform, we have to note the conditions which prevailed in the dark and turbulent ages from which the world was just escaping. It is difficult to realize the stagnation of mind lasting through centuries, when not only were books and current publications wanting, but even the foundation of literature, language itself. This was a time when the speech of Greece and Rome had passed out of use, and all the earlier literature had been lost to mankind. The incoming Teutonic tribes were of speech rude and widely diverse. For generations the new forms of the Romance languages had been in process of development, but were too crude and too changeful for high service. But by the beginning of the fourteenth century the new national languages were taking shape, and a literature was coming into existence and serving as the vehicle of fresh thinking in civil and religious matters, and of vigorous attacks upon the worldliness and corruption of the clergy. Thus for the first time in

many centuries men of like minds in different sections were put into free communication with one another, and were helping to build a public sentiment, a free conscience, and independent reasoning. Latent forces were brought into play, giving men quickened sensibilities, and lofty standards. Naturally, under such impulses, individuals of special powers of mind were stimulated to high thinking and literary production. Poets of fine feeling and delicate discrimination, like Chaucer in England and Dante and Petrarch in Italy, caught the ear of the people with their rhymes. Along with wit and fancy went also earnest exposition of the inalienable rights and growing demands of society, and scathing attacks on the vices and petty tyrannies of every rank of the clergy. Under such encouragement and enlightenment the people dared to think, and as the new movement broadened and deepened, the foundations of an oppressive ecclesiasticism were slowly sapped.

This period is well described as a revival of learning. The interest in thought and learning became widespread and enthusiastic. Men were delighted to throw off the ignorance and superstition which had hung about them so long, and to indulge in clearer

ideas and freer sentiments. They began to ransack all the monasteries of the West for manuscripts of ancient poets and philosophers. Further, the encroachments of the Turk in the East drove many Greek scholars westward, and these became teachers in the schools of Italy; which schools in turn came to be a secondary source of scholars and enthusiastic missionaries in this new movement of mental and spiritual awakening. The interest became contagious, men everywhere acquired a passion for learning, while princes rivaled each other as patrons of art and founders of libraries.

Just at this critical point, to swell the rising tide of interest in philosophy and literature, came the invention of printing, and with its rapid development a great multiplication of books, especially those that aided in the study of language. The effect upon the religious life was direct and immediate. Men were at once brought into contact with the Scriptures and with the writers of the early Church. Comparison was inevitable between the simplicity and purity of the apostolic teachings and the manners and morals of the clergy of the day. Multitudes in every land of Europe were thus prepared by enlarged information, clearer processes

of reasoning, and quickened consciences for a revolt from the grossness and the tyranny of the Roman Church.

We turn now, in a brief study of a few great and independent thinkers, to the second set of influences making for reform.

The very earliest of these pioneers of reform is William of Occam. He was born at Surrey, England, in 1270, and lived an active intellectual life for more than three score years and ten. He is to be ranked with the schoolmen by his methods of philosophy, and by his share in their faults of triviality, prolixity and formalism; yet his influence was felt by Wyclif, and his memory was gratefully cherished by Martin Luther. As lecturer in the University of Paris, he was known as the "Invincible Doctor"; and there he became the animating spirit of a group of able men. He was the earnest advocate of poverty and simplicity of life as against the luxury of the papal court, and upheld the independence of the state against the Church, and of its claims to papal infallibility.

Of an entirely different type of thought and labor, but next in the order of time, was Tauler the Mystic. He is the representative of a class of men who, however extrav-

agent on one side and limited on another, have stood for the unseen workings of the Spirit and the truth in the hearts and minds of men. To the credit of the mystics it must be said that they resisted the bondage and formalism of the ecclesiastical system which held all Europe in its power, while they had no contention against the formal doctrines of the Church. They went to an extreme in neglecting the body for the spirit and refusing to exercise common sense in important affairs, but they made a noble and valuable protest against outward exercises which had been over-magnified, and demonstrated the essential worth of spiritual things.

It was the grey dawn of the Reformation, but not only was the tint of day on the eastern sky, the mystics, in their own fashion, and despite some blunderings, were hastening its coming.

Tauler was born in 1290 A. D., of wealthy parents. At eighteen he gave himself to a religious life, which at that time always meant leaving the pursuits and enjoyments of life and joining some order of monks. Not long after this he sought Paris, which was then the center of learning, especially of the scholastic type. Here he was taught

the objectivity of Christianity, a thing to be studied in its observable phases entirely outside of one's own experiences. Human sympathies were not much stirred by thoughts of God and the Christ. The divine nature was looked at very much as now we gaze at the sun, and observe the changes of the moon.

Although this was the prevailing method of consideration applied to religious matters, it failed to satisfy the deeper cravings of Tauler's heart. His longing was for life, not logic, and he hungered for spiritual realities. At last he came back to Strassburg to take up work as a preaching friar, and happening to fall in with one who was opening the Scriptures in their simplicity to the people, he was greatly influenced, and was drawn away from the subtleties of the schools and toward a genuine piety. Under this experience the conviction grew upon him that rites, observances and speculations do not constitute the true life of man; which is found alone in the affections of the heart and in the sanctified will. New thoughts came to him of the reality and nearness of God, and a new development of personal character was the result. It is not necessary to follow even the few details of Tauler's

life which have been rescued from oblivion. It is enough to mark the spirit of genuine religion and of free action which manifested itself in him. That he should brave the ban of the Pope and that he should work without fear or reserve through the horrors of the Black Plague which took twenty-five millions out of Europe, demonstrated that the greatest thing in religion is to find the living God, and the greatest thing in life is to love one's neighbors as one's self. One enriched by this experience could not be subservient to the Roman hierarchy.

Next in order of time and far in advance of his age was John Wyclif, whose life covered the sixty years between 1324 A. D. and 1384 A. D. He was the most remarkable and influential of all the pre-Reformation leaders. Educated at Oxford, he became a part of the teaching force there, and rose through successive positions to be doctor of theology. As a thinker he was both clear and bold; discerning errors which had developed on every side and ruthlessly exposing them. On the one hand he attacked the fatally wrong doctrine of the excellence of poverty for its own sake, a doctrine which was the foundation stone of all the monkish orders. On the other hand, as against the

encroachments of the papacy, he championed the civil and political rights of the King and parliament. He was protected by great nobles, with John of Gaunt at their head, while going on to teach that papal decrees were without authority save from agreement with the teachings of Scripture. He even struck at all the "multiplied ranks of the priesthood," popes, cardinals, patriarchs, holding to the simplicity of organization in the early Church. He reasoned against such abuses as were connected with auricular confession, extreme unction, and over-elaboration of church worship, crowning the work of his fruitful life by giving to the people the Bible in their own vernacular, and insisting on their right to read it for themselves.

Wyclif was a hundred years too early to inaugurate a national movement for immediate reform, although there were lacking in him no elements of greatness or heroism. But he did needful service as a forerunner of reformers who were to come in the fullness of time. He laid the foundation for the great movement of the following century. He planted in English minds, and indeed scattered broadcast all over Europe, seed thoughts and germinant principles cal-

culated to enkindle the minds of men and to quicken them to zeal for purity and freedom.

The lineal descendant of Wyclif in religious thought and life was John Hus of Bohemia, whose martyrdom occurred in connection with the General Council at Constance, a hundred years before the conversion of Martin Luther. The noble Emperor, Charles IV., had given protection to a number of men who had made bold attack upon the vices of the clergy and the people, and had maintained the supremacy of the Bible and the Holy Spirit in religious matter. As this new party rose to power, John Hus appeared at its head. At thirty-three he was appointed Chapel Preacher, and a little later was made rector of the University at Prague, and there in self-defence "made appeal from the Pope poorly informed to the Pope better informed." But when he went on to attack the unscriptural practices of the Church and to repeat the teachings of Wyclif, there was hurled at him not merely an interdict but the papal ban of excommunication. He was persuaded by the Emperor to go into exile for the sake of peace; but from his retirement he sent letters to his people; displaying less acuteness than Wyclif, but not less zeal for practical right-

eousness. It was after two years of exile that he went under the safe conduct of Sigismund to Constance, and, as it proved, to a noble martyrdom. Cruel and untimely as his death was, in the judgment of history, yet it led to the enshrining of his personal character in the world's esteem, and to the intensifying of his appeals for the true principles of a free religious life.

In another land was born, not long after the death of Hus (viz., in 1452 A. D.), another forerunner of the Reformation, whose devoted work and heroic death opened the way for better things in both national and Church life. Savonarola, the Florentine reformer, was less devoted to the modification of doctrine than to the purification of civic, ecclesiastical, and personal morals. His start in life had fortunately not been in the way of training for orders. It was while pursuing the study of medicine that he had become alarmed and disgusted at the prevailing wickedness, and had entered the ranks of Dominican monks. His first attempts at preaching in Florence at the age of thirty had small influence on the tide of luxury in the gay city. But as he grew in earnestness of conviction and in power of appeal he discarded the methods of the

school and thundered in the mighty tones of a prophet. At last the city was moved, and the Cathedral was often crowded with intent listeners. In the year of his martyrdom he was made head of St. Mark's Convent, and his influence was so increased as to alarm the Medici against whose protection of immoralities he hurled his invectives. His administration of the convent and his counsels and prayers at the bedside of the dying Lorenzo are dramatically set forth by George Eliot in her matchless *Romola*. Savonarola interested himself in the minutest affairs of the state, and after the overthrow of the power of the Medici urged the adoption of a democratic constitution; and really brought about a new order of civic and social life.

But the infamous Corsair Pope was naturally out of sympathy with such a reformer; and when he found it impossible to purchase his silence by the bribe of a cardinal's hat or to quiet him by threats, he resorted to excommunication; which, indeed, Savonarola boldly repudiated. There was but one thing left for a tyrannical pontiff to do, and that the usual one of securing the speedy death of his opposer. He first brought about the discredit of the preacher and

secured his imprisonment. A little later followed the farce of a trial, unjust condemnation, the gibbet and the flames, with the scattering of his ashes upon the waters of the Arno. As so often happens, from such deeds of unholy violence, there was a return after many days, and a harvest was gathered in which wickedness could find no delight.

These five glorious reformers all died in faith, not having received the expected reforms, but having greeted them from afar, with the cherished assurance that what was denied to their sight would become reality to other eyes.

The sixth upon the list of great workers in this period lived to see the outbreak of the great revolution of religious life in the Church. Erasmus was born at Rotterdam in 1455 A. D., but began his active work on the other side of the Channel. When John Colet, son of the Lord Mayor of London, came back from Italy, where the revival of learning bore its earliest fruits, he gave in the English metropolis a series of lectures on the Epistles of St. Paul, in which he discarded the artificial methods in vogue and set forth the simple teachings of the great apostle in clear and forceful language. Among his hearers, sitting beside Thomas

More, was a young stranger from Holland. It marks one of the leadings of Providence that this fine Dutch scholar should have been driven from his native land for such instruction and such personal fellowship. It was thus in England that Erasmus found his awakening, and before he left her shores he sent forth his "Praise of Folly," to be read by thousands who sympathized with his keen ridicule of the evils so rife in society and the Church. From London he went to Basel; where, under civil protection he worked at an edition of the Greek Testament, and at a translation of it into Latin. He also prepared editions of the great fathers of the Church, thus opening to the men of that generation the fundamental truths of Christianity and the history of its development.

His splendid scholarship was devoted to the enlightenment of the world, and especially to the presentation of the Scriptures to the people in their own tongue. At the same time, in lighter vein, but with great effectiveness, he held up to ridicule idleness, illiteracy, self-indulgence, useless austerities, and other abuses of the age. He was sincerely devoted to his mission, which was to replace superstition, dogmatism and

bigotry with culture and liberality of spirit, and thereby to establish a type of Christianity simpler and purer than he had found in the world.

Long before his life work was finished he witnessed the outbreak of a great revolution, many features of which were abhorrent to his taste. His quiet scholarly habits had unfitted him for participation in a stormy contest for liberty of thought and life, or even for personal sympathy with men who were giving themselves in heroic devotion to the great conflict. He desired reformation without disruption, and hoped to bring about radical improvements without dismembering the historical Church. But he builded far better than he knew, and helped on the movement which he deplored, but which was unquestionably the method necessary for the achievement of liberty from the thralldom of a corrupt hierarchy.

CHAPTER VI

THE LUTHERAN REFORMATION

We are now stepping over the threshold of the modern era. As the life work of Christ gives an unmistakable line of division between the old and the new, so does the great transforming movement of the sixteenth century. Tracing the story from the earlier ages, coming up to the Reformation from the further side, we find the religious awakening at once astounding and natural. One is shocked by the overthrow of a power which had continued for more than a thousand years. At the same time, that men should finally open their eyes to vast evils and arouse themselves for their suppression seems quite inevitable. When the darkness, confusion and stagnation of the Middle Ages gave way before the Revival of Learning, which brought with it mental quickening and a great enkindling of human energies, the cruel restrictions which had so long checked the development of a pure religious life among the people of all papal lands were necessarily broken through, and great

changes rapidly took place which for the first time made a fundamental and widespread renovation a possibility.

Great states were growing into consciousness of strength and of personal rights. Monarchs were raising peasant armies to destroy the remaining power of the feudal nobility; and at the same time the peasants themselves with new weapons of warfare in their hands were recognizing their own manhood as potent against both lords and kings. The ancient philosophies were being widely studied in the rapidly multiplying books of the new age; the bold declarations and lofty standards of great masters of both political and religious science were becoming public property; the brilliant discoveries of a new world across the seas were electrifying the older nations and thrilling them with larger conceptions of life.

The conditions were in a general way highly favorable for the action of specific influences, and for successful leadership on the part of great men.

The causes of the revolution are not always traceable, for there are deep undercurrents of thought and feeling which no eye can follow; but the sources of many potent influences are beyond question. The Ref-

ormation was not, as some astrologers of the day declared, due "to a certain uncommon and malignant position of the stars which scattered the spirit of giddiness and innovation over the world." It was not characterized by "giddiness," but by clearness and profundity of thinking. For the first time in centuries men were aroused in feeling and untrammelled in reasoning. The causes which the student of history has to seek are those which brought about this novel condition in the world's life. The people had been supine under priestly domination; they were so no longer. They had tolerated gravest wrongs against the name of Christ and against their own interests, but now they were becoming intolerant of injustice and oppression.

The leaders of the movement went forward only one step at a time. It would have appalled them, possibly have daunted them, if at the very outset they could have looked down the vista of centuries and have marked the full effect of their words and deeds. It was enough for them to act at each critical moment according to the high behest of reason and conscience. They were moved by manful and religious convictions, and therefore played the hero at

every crisis. It was neither to their credit nor discredit that the times were ripe for revolution. The mighty fabric of the hierarchy of Rome was tottering to its fall. The slightest push sufficed to send it over. Material had been collecting which was like tinder waiting for the spark; the spark fell and the flames broke forth in a widespread conflagration.

The Reformation was not, as Roman Catholic writers would fain have us believe, the work of infidels or fanatics. The initial impulse which determined the direction of affairs came from men of profoundest religious faith, and the movement itself was the united effort of thousands of men and women who longed for pure and noble living. The controlling motives sprang from religious feeling. There were doubtless instances of proclaimed scepticism, there were others where liberty ran into license; but these phases were subordinate and not characteristic. Men had been unconsciously repelled from the standards of moral and religious life set by popes and priests, and were waiting with an unrecognized yearning for faith and spirituality. When there came an appeal to break away from the thralldom of a false rulership and take to themselves

high prerogatives as the children of God they answered it and grew into stalwart Christian faith and heroism.

There had been as good reason for such a movement five centuries before, but then the land slept in darkness, whereas now there was a flood of light breaking in. In Wyclif, Hus and Savonarola there was clear vision and daring leadership but the people were not prepared to follow. Now, for the first time, all conditions were favorable for a great awakening, and for a widespread and unflinching struggle for religious freedom and purity. The real Gospel had become infused into the minds of the people, and mighty as was the institution which held the right of entrance into the path toward the living and loving God, they would no longer be kept in check. They had at first no notion of overturning this institution. Their eyes were not even fixed upon it. They simply saw the goal of religious life and liberty, and pressed steadily toward it without measuring the sacrifice and peril demanded for the successful prosecution of their holy purpose.

It was a movement among the masses first, and peculiarly among the common people of Germany; but both its origin and its

course must be traced to the leaders of the day. The leaders were leagues in advance of the people. They were better informed, bolder and clearer in their thinking; they saw the significance and magnitude of the issue, and so became to their fellow men interpreters of the truth and inspirers to heroic action.

The reformation had different phases. It was a movement affecting beliefs, rites, the ecclesiastical organizations of the Church, and indeed the whole mode of Christian living. It marked also the beginning of a new era in culture and civilization. At the same time it was political, affecting the motives of sovereigns and the fortune of nations.

In studying this movement we naturally turn, first of all, to Germany, where the conditions were all favorable. That it should have affected Germany more deeply than the other nations of Europe is easily explained. On the one hand, as Hegel has set forth, while other maritime nations were going out to America and the Indies in wild quest of riches and the dominion of lands, Luther was opening up new realms of thought to a seriously minded people. On the other hand, Leo X., son of Lorenzo the

Magnificent, occupied with his hunting and pageants, and with his pursuit of culture and art, was not greatly disturbed at reports from Saxony. "It is only a squabble of monks," he said, and he was content with an attempt through Cardinal Cajetan, his legate, to reduce the most refractory monk among them to terms. But the emissary of the Pope met at Augsburg a very different man from the picture in the mind of Leo. With him he had no success.

To sum up the favorable points in the situation, there was provision for the movement in the thoughtfulness and earnestness of the people, in the temporary preoccupation of the Pope, in the diversion of the emperor's attention, in the favor of a great prince, and in the work of Martin Luther. The element furnished by the great leader is so important that it will be well to recall the story of his life and work. Luther belongs to the limited number of truly *great* men. As Bayard Taylor has expressed it, he was "One of the creative spirits of the race," "a man of great intuition," "the only protestant leader whose heart was as large as his brain." Professor Fisher says that "Martin Luther was the unquestionable hero of the Reformation," and "that his

dauntless determination was the rallying point for multitudes."

Martin Luther was born at Eisleben, in November, 1483 A. D. His father was a miner of the higher type. He was strictly trained in moral and religious matters, and in due time became a monk. It was the sale of indulgences by Tetzel, near Wittenberg, in 1517 A. D., that stirred Luther first to preach against a custom so infamous and then to write his celebrated theses in defense of his position. These "indulgences" were commutations of penance which were given upon payment of money. The right to issue them was the exclusive prerogative of the Pope. At first they covered the remission of the punishment of souls in purgatory, but afterward, according to Martin Luther, they secured the remission of present penalties. Theoretically, contrition was required of the recipient of an indulgence, yet it generally appeared to the people a straight out bargain with the Pope as absolver.

The famous theses of Luther denied the right or power of the Pope to remove other penalties than those imposed by himself, and declared that his power never reached beyond death. The theses were, according to the custom of medieval universities, only

propositions propounded for academic debate. They stirred up a commotion, far beyond their author's calculation. Throughout all Germany, the hawkers of indulgences were driven to defense and discussion. Froude declares the date of the posting of the theses, October 31st, 1517, "the most memorable day in modern European history." Was it an easy thing to put them upon the door of the Castle Church of Wittenberg? We listen to Luther's own words. "In what straits my soul was confined during the first of the following year; to what submissions I descended; nay, in what despair I was all but involved can be little conceived. . . . Indeed, at that time I had a much stronger reverence for the Pontifical Church and a much deeper conviction that it was the true church than had my opponents who were loudly extolling it."

Meanwhile Luther was forced into public debate with Doctor John Eck, a theological opponent. He had been summoned to Augsburg to meet Cardinal Cajetan. He went under safe-conduct of Emperor Maximilian, but in expectation of death. How much hung in the balance! Being young, diffident and modest, Luther was prepared to yield much if only the Cardinal would be

moderate in his exactions and generous in his concessions. But wickedness overdid itself. Cajetan was scornful. And why not to a poor monk! Goaded in this way, Luther would not retract unless he were satisfactorily answered from Scripture. No agreement was reached, and the return to Wittenberg was accomplished in safety. In 1519 A. D. came the Leipzig disputation before Duke George. Luther again faced his old opponent, Doctor John Eck. Luther had much knowledge of the Scriptures, of the Fathers of the Church, and of Church history, upon which to draw. He now saw whither his contention was leading, and for this reason the event was of the utmost significance to the reformer. He found the doctrine of sovereign grace, to which he had anchored, incompatible with the whole round of medieval ceremonial life. He saw now that he was breaking with Rome. And all Germany saw it, too.

His opponents, alive to the significant situation, pressed for a papal bull. Eck came with it, condemning forty-one of Luther's theses. On the 10th of December, 1520 A. D., Luther solemnly burned a copy of it. It was deliberately done. Marching at the head of a procession of professors and

students to the market place, where a bonfire had been made, to which one of the professors applied a light, Luther threw the papal bull upon the flames. It is said that he afterward confessed to have trembled before the deed, but declared that when it was done he was better pleased with it than with any act of his life. Unbounded proof he gave of his cool and determined bravery. Knowing the danger, he did not flinch.

We come next to the famous Diet of Worms, called in April, 1521 A. D., by Emperor Charles, upon appeal from Pope Leo, in order that Luther might be put under the ban of the Empire, as he already was under that of the Pope. The German Princes, partly from a love of fair play, and partly to emphasize their political independence of the Pope, urged the Emperor not to condemn Luther unheard; and thus came about his summons to the Diet to answer for himself. On the way to the Diet Luther was greeted by enthusiastic supporters, the University of Erfurt going out in a body to salute him. But occasional voices warned him of the insecurity of the Emperor's safe-conduct. It was in reply to these words of warning that he made the famous utterance: "Yes, they burned Hus, but not the truth

with him. I will go on though as many devils were aiming at me as there are tiles on the roofs."

To Luther the Diet was an imposing spectacle. It included the highest temporal, social and spiritual powers of the nation. When, therefore, it was demanded of him: "Do you retract?" the peasant's son was for the moment overawed and asked for time. After a night of prayer and of quiet thought he recovered himself. Daylight found him fresh, courageous, collected, his own splendid master and theirs.

He divided his address into three parts. First, there were simple gospel truths accepted by all. Secondly, there were violent words against particular persons, which were faulty, and required modification. Thirdly, there were declarations against papal laws and customs which had tried all Christendom. These he would not retract. In a clear, strong voice he gave them utterance, first in Latin, and then in German. Upon further and brutal challenge by Doctor Eck he spoke the immortal words: "Here stand I, I cannot do otherwise. God help me." It was as Froude declared: "One of the finest scenes in history." It is perpetuated by the impressive group of bronze fig-

ures surrounding the sturdy form of Luther in the City of Worms.

The battle raged all day, and by torch-light in the evening, but the hearts of the laymen were touched by the courage of the man on trial, and would permit no violence. Luther was ordered home by the Elector until the Diet should decide upon the case. It became evident that the majority would pronounce for his death, and Luther was saved only by a ruse on the part of the Elector. He was set upon while passing through the Thuringian forest by an armed party and carried off to Wartburg Castle. The secret was well kept. Luther had disappeared and was in exile ten months. At the castle he passed as Ritter George, a captive knight. This was the most picturesque incident of his life. While in this retreat he dropped the monk's gown, donned the dress of a gentleman, suffered his beard to grow, wore a sword, and was treated as a distinguished guest. He rode and hunted as he liked, but worked with energy on a translation of the Bible into the German vernacular.

Luther had both wisdom and steadiness. While in retirement at Wartburg, his colleague, Carlstadt, who had opened the debate at Leipzig, was the cause of grave

disturbances at Wittenberg by his assaults on the rites and ordinances of the church. The trouble was increased by certain enthusiasts who claimed inspiration, and prophesied a great social convulsion. Luther, with his good sense, saw at once the danger of an outburst of fanaticism, which would destroy all that had been gained. Unmindful of his personal peril, and of the urgent warnings of his protector, he returned at once to Wittenberg. In a few powerful sermons he pled for Christian moderation and had the satisfaction of seeing the commotion subside. He did not, however, go back to his asylum, but continued at Wittenberg, working without cessation as preacher and teacher. Twenty years more of life remained to him but victory had already been won. He continued as director of the great movement now under full head, counseling peace as against the Peasants' War, showing confidence in the truth and occupying himself with preaching and conferences to the end of life.

Luther took a bold stand for home-life. It was "as brave a step to marry a runaway nun as to burn the papal bull." He had counseled the clergy to marry, and was naturally commended to set the example to

others who were hesitating. As a monk, he had been under vows of celibacy, but he had ceased to believe in monasticism, and had repudiated the vows of the order. When, therefore, he was settled as Professor at the University of Wittenberg, he was ready for a home of his own. Catharine Von Bora, sixteen years younger than himself, had been a nun in a distant convent. Detesting the life, she, with a half dozen others, had gladly welcomed the release which Luther secured for them. She was a simple, active, sensible woman, and thoroughly consecrated. With her Luther settled down to a busy, useful life, and was quietly happy in his home, a pleasant, roomy building on the banks of the Elbe.

But in spite of domestic happiness, Luther grew tired of the battle of life. It seemed to him as if the world itself must also be worn out and near its end. When but little past three score years, he wrote to a friend calling himself, "old, spent, worn, weary, cold, and almost sightless." He makes one think of "Paul, the aged," writing at the same time of life from captivity in Rome.

The great reformer died on a chance visit to Eisleben, his birth-place, in the winter of

1546, A. D. His body was carried back to Wittenberg with an armed escort of cavalry, the church bells tolling in the villages by the way; the company being followed along the route by thousands of mourners. At last, the worn-out frame was laid at rest in front of the pulpit of the Castle Church, on the doors of which his theses had been posted thirty years before.

His last days had been full of weariness and despondency. He mourned over the wickedness and frivolity which he saw about him. He had become more rigid in his dogmatism with advancing age and ill-health, and on account of theological differences had even fallen out of sympathy with his beloved Melanchthon, who, by the way, approached much more nearly the modern position on important questions than did he, and who persisted in his affection and respect for the heroic reformer. No human life or character is without defects. It was impossible for a rugged nature like that of Luther to develop in days of storm and stress the qualities of gentleness and self-restraint or that broad and sweet charity which is ideal. The basis of his character, however, was firm and true, the purpose of his life noble and conscientious; therefore,

in spite of faults and limitations, his great powers could be brought into service for a noble cause. Both Melanchthon and Erasmus were his superiors in traits and attainments which we prize, but neither could have furnished impulse and guidance for the stupendous movement which then convulsed the world. Luther was the leader par excellence, born for the hour, and for the vast undertaking. Dr. Döllinger, of the Old Catholics, a life-long opponent of Protestantism, recognized and freely admitted his rare powers. "He had complete comprehension of the German nature," he says. "The heart and mind of his people was in his hand like a lyre in the hand of a musician. His eloquence was irresistible, sweeping everything before it. Even those Germans who abhor him as the principal heretic and seducer of the nation, cannot escape; they must discourse with his words and think with his thoughts."

The opportunity for Luther and his confrères to work out the undertaking was furnished in part, as already suggested, by the occupation of the Emperor, Charles V, in other affairs, and by the constant and varied pressure upon him from two quarters, Francis I. and the Popes. Indeed, in Ger-

many, as in every other land, the religious movement was hindered or favored, almost to the point of deciding its fate, by the drift of political fortunes.

Emperor Charles would have attempted the suppression of the Lutherans had he not been so continually involved in intrigues and conflicts with Francis for possessions in Italy, and also in setting affairs to rights in Spain, the other half of his imperial domain. It was doubtless providential that he was thus compelled to leave Germany to take care of itself. Therefore, although Luther was legally an outlaw, being under a ban pushed through on the last day of the Diet at Worms, and also under the formal condemnation of the Church, he was safe under the protection of the Elector of Saxony.

In the absence of the Emperor on his political missions, the Government was in the hands of a Council of the Regency. The nobles composing this Council happened to be personally favorable to reform, and at the same time alive to the danger of thwarting the people, and so refused to carry out the edict determined against Luther at the Diet. They even went so far as to reply to the Pope, who was urging the execution of the edict, with a list of a hundred

grievances which Germany had to allege against the Court of Rome. The Protestants were helped, not long after, by the League of Torgau, composed of princes favorable to the Reformation. Soon the Pope made alliance with Francis I. to check the power of the German Emperor, and Charles was obliged to reverse his attitude toward the Lutherans for a time, even seeking their support. The result of it all was an imperial decree recognizing their legal existence, and furnishing a great landmark in the history of the Reformation.

Another turn of political affairs set the Emperor free. He at once made a treaty with the Pope and issued an edict forbidding the progress of reform. The *protest* of Elector John, with some friendly princes and fourteen allied cities, gave the name of Protestant to the Lutheran cause at the Diet of Spires, 1529.

At the Diet of Augsburg, 1530, the Emperor recently crowned at Bologna by the Pope, as head of the Holy Roman Empire, determined to make some arrangement to restore unity to the Church. But the Protestants were equally resolved on putting forward their "Confession," drawn up by Melanchthon, defining the essential tenets of

the reformers. The efforts at compromise were therefore unsuccessful. The Protestant princes, and certain imperial cities of South Germany united in the famous League of Smalcald, to resist the arbitrary proceedings of the Emperor. The League strengthened itself by alliance with France, Denmark and Bavaria, and the result was the Peace of Nuremberg, 1532, which provided that religious affairs should be left *in statu quo* until arranged by a new Diet for general council.

For ten years after the Peace of Nuremberg, Charles, being too closely occupied with wars with Francis I, and with the Turks, to disturb the Protestants, nothing appeared to check the rapid progress of the Reformation. Protestantism was established in the heart of South Germany, while the area embraced by the Smalcald League was extended by the accession of princes and cities, making a party sufficiently powerful to incline the Emperor toward religious toleration.

All might have gone well but for divisions among the Protestants themselves. Princes and cities became jealous of one another and contentions arose. While thus weakened by internal dissensions they found the Em-

peror, who had been freed by the temporary settlement of his warlike affairs, renewing attempts, both open and concealed, to suppress the Reformation. So it came about that the years which followed the death of Luther, saw intricate conflicts on German soil. The German people, angry at finding their country held by armies from Spain and Italy, were, with difficulty, brought to submission in South Germany, while, in the Northern States, the resistance was fierce and prolonged. The result appeared in the Augsburg Diet of 1555, where a religious peace was concluded, granting toleration and certain rights under the princes. In spite of appearances, however, the seeds were sown of a strife, which, for generations, was to distract the land. Charles, himself, dissatisfied with the proceedings, refused to have part in them, and, afterward, in the days of retirement, in the Convent of Yuste, expressed regret at having "allowed the man who had stirred up all the commotion to depart in peace from the Diet of Worms."

Of the continental countries to be studied, the next in time, if not in interest, is Switzerland. During the fifteen years between the posting of the theses of Luther

and the Peace of Nuremburg, a similar movement was going on in ancient Helvetia affecting not only the rites of the Church, but the social and political life of Swiss Communities. The movement was due to Ulrich Zwingli, son of the magistrate of the village of Wildhaus, less than a year younger than the German Reformer. As a youth, bright-minded and eager for knowledge, he took advantage of excellent opportunities for study at Vienna and Basel. He entered the priesthood, and at Glarus, his first charge, he became a close student of the Greek Testament of Erasmus, even copying out the Epistles of St. Paul, in order to take them about with him and commit them to memory. From his youth his patriotism was intense, and he was greatly distressed at the lack of zeal for their own country displayed by the Swiss mercenary soldiers, and at the vice and lawlessness which they brought back from their campaigns.

His first approach to a break with the Pope came, as in the case of Luther, from his preaching against the sale of indulgences. This happened in 1518. In the same year he was called to the Cathedral Church at Zurich, and a little later he refused longer to receive a pension from the

Pope, and declared against all foreign entanglements. He turned more and more from the authority of the Church to that of the Scriptures, and, in his sincere reverence for the Word became the leader of a quiet but thorough-going religious revolution. Engaging and forceful in his personality, he was learned, upright, fearless and eloquent.

Before long he obtained from the town council of Zurich permission for priests to preach what they found in Scripture, and, in 1523, successfully defended sixty-seven propositions, assailing all the characteristics of the Roman Catholic system. In the following year, he secured a decree forbidding the use of images, and the sacrifice of the mass. Being far less conservative than Luther, he even organized an independent church with representative laymen in office. Whatever smacked of superstition was discarded, and, yet, all was done in an orderly manner and with the full support of the public authorities. All medieval features were abolished. Celibacy was put aside, and Zwingli himself was happily married. Withal, it was a wholesome religious movement, giving great uplift to the life of the community. Zwingli's views were broad and intelligent. He taught that Christ died

for the entire race; he considered original sin disorder rather than guilt; he denied the objective presence of Christ in the sacrament of The Lord's Supper.

From Zurich, the reform movement spread to Bern, and then to Basel and Schaffhausen, going everywhere, not merely in the interest of a free and regenerate religious life, but also of the body politic. The movement was more rapid and steady than in Germany; first, because Zwingli's mind more swiftly and freely took in new ideas; and, secondly, because the Reformation in Switzerland was overlooked by the authorities of the Church until it had really become a *fait accompli*. Dark days were, however, before the Protestants, for at last the Catholic party was aroused. In 1531, the Forest cantons went in armed force against Zurich, and among the slain in the battle near the city was Zwingli, acting as Chaplain. Terms of peace followed, but these were humiliating and depressing to the Protestant cause.

The sway of the Reformation in Scandinavia depended not a little upon political chances and changes. The fortunes of Denmark, Norway and Sweden had been united in a compact of union since the end

of the fourteenth century. Christian II., who was on the throne at the time of the outbreak in Germany, was detested for treachery, and came to merited downfall in 1523. His successor, Frederick I. took oath to grant no toleration to the Lutherans but within three years the reform movement had made such headway as to secure recognition from the king and to win the favor of nobles who were hoping to gain possession of the riches of the Church. Within a year the Diet had ordained that there should be religious toleration for Lutherans and that the prelates should look to the King and not to the Pope for ratification of their election. Under such support Protestantism naturally gained speedy ascendancy.

There were times when the parties in Church and State were in conflict from various motives. Upon the death of Frederick the clergy asserted themselves; the deposed king, Christian II., sought reinstatement; while in the important city of Lübeck the democracy arose under the impulse of the new teaching. The election of Christian III., son of Frederick, was brought about; with the result that the interests of Protestantism were supported vigorously in Denmark and in Norway. In

Sweden there was an uprising under Gustavus Vasa, who favored Lutheranism less from a deep religious conviction than from a desire to overthrow the ecclesiastical aristocracy. He elevated Lutherans to high office in Church and State, and at a crisis in 1527 resolved, for the sake of absolutely needed revenue, to confiscate the wealth of the Church. He pushed the measure through the Diet, together with a grant to preachers to proclaim the pure word of God. Protestantism had been set up by legal process to suit the purposes of the king, but it soon found favor with the people, and, before the century closed, the Augsburg Protestant Confession had been accepted as the creed of the National Church.

Of the Reformation in Spain and Italy, little need be said in a general study of the European movement. Some individual minds were stirred by the new views, but the fire was always stamped out before it could become a conflagration. In Italy, the papacy was a national institution to which many clung with patriotic pride. Not a few powerful men held offices of honor emolument, and were firmly attached by interest or loyalty to the old order of things. Furthermore, two institutions came into ex-

istence in both of these countries which had immense influence in checking every discoverable beginning of Protestantism. These were the Inquisition, which was organized after the Council of Trent, on the model of the Spanish Inquisition, which had been devised by Ferdinand and Isabella to discover and punish the Jewish converts who returned to their former faith, and the Society of Jesus, founded by Loyola and propagated with zeal in both countries.

The story of the inhuman persecutions in the Netherlands, of the matchless courage of the people, and of the high-minded leadership of their princes, has gone out into all the world. The general intelligence of every class in Holland made that country peculiarly open to the reform movement, influences from which poured into it from both Germany and France. A Jesuit historian has declared that the Rhine and the Meuse brought no more water to the low countries than they did religious contagion; the one from Luther and the other from Calvin. Charles V., whose authority reached to the North Sea, issued edicts of suppression, though, on the whole, he was fairly considerate to the end of his reign. But his son, the fanatical Philip II., suc-

ceeding him on the throne of Spain, pushed to the extreme every measure for the obliteration of both civil and religious liberty in the Belgic provinces. It was declared heretical for a layman even to read the Bible, and every incentive was offered to base men to act as informers. Then followed days too dark for belief; save for the darker ones which were to follow. For multitudes there was beheading, burning, or burying alive. Infuriated mobs, blind to the dictates of reason, retaliated by breaking into Cathedrals and Churches, destroying pictures and images, thus giving excuse for even severer measures. That almost impossible fiend, the Duke of Alva, was sent to the Low countries as representative of his royal master, whom he over-matched in craft and cruelty, staying not his hand from the slaughter of multitudes and of the noblest. Out of the struggle were produced men of sincerity, devotion, courage and good statesmanship, whose fame will never die; men like Egmont, and Horn and William, the Hero of Orange. One after another, even to the greatest among them, perished by execution or assassination; yet, their work was finally accomplished, and, by 1579, the seven Northern Provinces had

formed the Utrecht Union, which was the germ of the Dutch Republic. Philip III., of Spain, was compelled to make a truce with the Union, the independence of which was secured in 1648 by the Peace of Westphalia.

In France, there were two movements looking toward reform before the rise of Protestantism. One of these originated three centuries earlier, when, in Southern France the Waldenses flourished in peace until an evil day saw them nearly exterminated by fierce persecution. The other came one century before the Reformation, when, in the German Council of Constance and Basel, earnest men sought a modification of the corrupt administration of the church. In the sixteenth century the awakening came through the literary men whom Francis I. brought from Italy to ornament his Court. Poets, artists and scholars enticed by the munificence of the brilliant king, promoted a revival of learning, and discredited the theology of medieval times. To Jaques Lefevre is due the title of "Father of the French Reformation," because his commentaries on the Psalms and the Epistles of Paul, about 1510, clearly taught the doctrine of justification by faith

and the supremacy of the Bible. He looked for the coming of the kingdom and said to Farel, who became a leader in France and Switzerland five years before Luther posted the theses at Wittenberg, "God will renovate the world and you will be a witness of it."

The learned were giving open minds to his teachings when word came of the stirrings in Saxony, whereupon the Doctors of the Sorbonne became alarmed. Heresy was at once stigmatized by the faculty, and punished by the Parliament as an offence against the State; and the leaders of the new thought were crushed or banished. Protestantism had powerful friends, but the movement encountered persistent opposition from the queen-mother and the chancellor. Francis vacillated. His love of learning inclined him to freedom of thought, but he was opposed to any reform which would overthrow the Roman Catholic system, and he had no sympathy with attacks on the Sacrament. He shrank from a religious division of his kingdom, holding to the old motto, "One king, one law, one faith."

Strong influences from both sides were brought to bear upon him. The Landgrave of Hesse came to negotiate in person in be-

half of Protestantism, while the papal party used all possible methods to sustain their cause. It was the rash act of over-zealous reformers that finally turned Francis against the Protestants. These enthusiasts enraged the people and offended the king by posting the city, and even the royal bed-chamber, with placards denouncing the mass. Forthwith Francis joined in solemn religious processions, and gave his consent to the burning of heretics, claiming that they were fanatical and seditious. He became less and less tolerant, and refused to save the Waldenses from massacre. As a result of this course within a few years of his death, the country was plunged into civil war and became "the frightful theatre of the battle of sects and nations."

The work of the Reformation in France is associated with the name of John Calvin. As Professor Fisher has said: "To the major part of even Calvinists he was never more than a bloodless abstraction," yet his influence was enormous. Having been born only eight years before the posting of the theses at Wittenberg he was contemporary with the second generation of reformers, coming into prominence after Luther's work in Germany had become firmly established

and Zwingli had crowned his labors in Switzerland by heroic death on the battlefield. His youth was free from hardship, his father being a man of ample income and of social standing. His education was of a high order. For a while he looked toward the priesthood; and later, upon a change of plans by his ambitious father, toward the profession of a jurist. He attained marked excellence in legal studies, but at this very time, under the influence of a relative who was the first Protestant translator of the Bible into French, he began to direct his attention to Scripture. His Greek professor, somewhat earlier than this, had guided him in the study of the New Testament in the original. His conversion was a sudden and deep experience, in which he felt on one hand, the awful holiness of God, and, on the other, the iniquity of his own sinful soul. Penances failed him, and he could only throw himself on the mercy of God.

Somewhat against his inclinations he became, on returning to Paris, the recognized leader of the Protestants, and the guide of those who sought religious counsel and instruction. Before long a persecution arose which drove him out of the city, to find in

Basel the shelter and the seclusion which he prized. It was here that, for the sake of appeasing the fury of Francis I. against the Protestants he wrote his famous "Institutes of the Christian Religion," containing an introductory appeal to the king, full of force and eloquence amazing in a man of twenty-seven.

In outward circumstances, training, and personal characteristics, Calvin was most unlike the German leader; and his writings, while of marked effect, are as far removed in power of popular impression from those of Luther. It was the genius and the passion of the German Reformer to give the Bible to the people in the simplest forms of peasant speech, while the exact scholarship and patrician culture of Calvin made the "Institutes," both in French and Latin, a distinct contribution to literature, and a source of immediate influence upon the educated classes of society. His logical and well-trained mind worked with such accuracy that his opinions underwent no change with passing years, and the revised and enlarged editions of his great work preserved to the last the identity of his earlier teachings. His theology was of the Augustinian order, rather than of the Clementine and Alexan-

drian type which colors the thought of to-day. He had magnified God in his own experience of conversion, and in his system of theological truths he gave dominant place to the sovereignty of Him who rules above human weakness and sin, and who has reasons both wise and good for actions which are inscrutable to man.

Calvin, having come to his conclusions with care and reflection, thereafter held them with such intensity of conviction as to render him impatient of dissent. It is said that even his friendly personal letters were marked by a censorious tone, not easily condoned. His irritability was doubtless much intensified by physical disorders and by crowding cares; so that, to use his own expression, "the wild beasts of his anger" raged beyond control. Yet, the sincere self-sacrifice of his life and his devotion to the interests of Church and State were so manifest that after his death the Senate of Geneva, which had constantly witnessed his disinterestedness and fearlessness, spoke of "the majesty" of his character.

The story of Calvin's life is now interwoven with that of the Reformation in Switzerland,—which we laid down at the death of Zwingli. The Forest cantons drove

Protestantism out of many districts but it maintained itself in Zurich, Basel, Bern, and later was established in Geneva by vote of the citizens. The movement in the latter city went to what now seems to us an extreme; all church festivals, except Sunday, being abolished, together with various amusements, such as dancing and masquerades. The people were compelled to take a solemn oath to live according to the rule of the Gospel. Such discipline was too severe for a pleasure-loving people; and it naturally resulted in discontent and in a reaction of feeling. A strong party arose clamoring for the old order of things, and Geneva was torn by intestine strife.

Through Farel, an ardent reformer, Calvin was led to greater extremes and was drawn into the thickest of these contentions. The people were forbidden to wear ornaments of any kind, or to engage in obnoxious sports. Many retaliated with bitter hatred, and the conflict ended in the banishment of Calvin from the city.

He came back, however, to end his days there, held in honor by the authorities, and working effectively for a new order of things. Church and State were united. The rules of the Church were enforced by

temporal penalties; moral censorship was exercised over every person in the city; high and low, rich and poor, being alike brought under inflexible laws. The respect of the citizens gave Calvin not only great influence in ecclesiastical affairs but in the framing of civil legislation. Influenced less by his legal studies than by Hebrew legislation and by his own severity of disposition, innocent amusements came in for penalties as well as offences of a much graver sort. Such stringent regulations brought at length their natural fruitage in disaffection and in a long and bitter contest.

The idea of the broad function of the State prevailed universally in this century, and heresy was held a crime to be punished by the civil authorities. Under this condition of things occurred the famous case of Servetus, a Spaniard, of an inquisitive turn of mind, much given to natural sciences as well as to theological speculation. A book which contained pantheistic notions came under examination and, although it had been published anonymously, caused his arrest and conviction. At his trial he defended his opinions not only acridly but with violent denunciation, caricaturing the doctrine of the Trinity in a way considered

dangerous and blasphemous by his hearers, and unnecessarily irritating them by his contemptuous tone. The result of the trial would have been the same in any land of Europe. It is probable that Calvin expected, with good ground from the previous course of Servetus, that the condemned man would retract his errors; but when he did not, and went to the stake, Bullinger, the successor of Zwingli, and even the gentle-spirited Melanchthon, shared in the general opinion of reformers that no other course could have been taken.

Calvin had his faults and limitations, some traceable to the temper and the notions of the times in which he lived, some to his disordered physical condition and over-taxed nervous system, and some to the human frailty for which we all need broad charity. Yet his labors were nobly inspired and his influence was widely extended. As years went on men flocked to him at Geneva from all quarters of Europe, and on his list of correspondents were "monarchs, princes, nobles and theologians." Before his eyes closed on earthly scenes they rested upon firmly-rooted institutions of learning upon a peaceful city, and upon a people lenient to his old time imperiousness, regardful

of his sincerity and appreciative of the splendid services rendered to Church and State. The verdict of history is certainly against the minute supervision which the Church attempted to maintain over details of conduct; and which abridged individual liberty, and excited bitter opposition. At the same time it is being more and more widely acknowledged that the principles which underlay Calvin's system have been a powerful factor in developing independence within the Church, and civic liberty outside of it. Wherever Calvinism spread, in England, Scotland, Holland and France, men learned to defend their rights against the tyranny of civil rulers.

The results in France have yet to be rapidly sketched. Francis' son, Henry II., was no friend of Protestantism. Yet, in spite of royal opposition, the burning of people and books, the movement spread so that by 1558 there were two thousand places of worship. A general synod was secretly held in Paris where a Calvinistic confession of faith and a Presbyterian form of church government were adopted. This development so aroused the king that he concluded a humiliating peace with Spain in order to use his army at home; but his

death in a tournament arrested the threatened persecution. The succession of his son, Francis, a boy of sixteen, weak in body and mind, gave scope to various political schemes on the part of the crafty queen-mother, Catharine De Medici, and the Duke of Guise and Cardinal Lorraine, uncles of the widowed queen, Mary Stuart. The Protestants had become a powerful political party, with princes and nobles among their leaders. Such were the King of Navarre, the prince of Condé and Admiral Coligni; the first of these being brilliant but unreliable, the second, primarily a soldier; the third one of the heroes of French history, able, sagacious, pure and of earnest piety. These princes united to protect the young king from his untrustworthy advisers; and by using the forces of Protestantism and making a show of boldness they hoped to save the country from civil war. They were not wholly successful; yet more liberal terms were granted to the Huguenots, as the party now came to be called. This aroused the Guises to set on foot shrewd plots, and to institute rigorous measures to crush the Protestant leaders, but before this came to actual accomplishment the young king died and a second

time a reprieve was granted to the party of reform.

During the minority of Charles IX., a greater degree of tolerance was exercised and Protestantism flourished among all classes of society. But at a great conference comprised of notables from both parties, held in 1561, there was a failure to reach terms of agreement, and the hopes which had been cherished of a religious union were dispelled; even the Edict of Saint Germain, of the following year, accomplished nothing on account of the bigotry and fierceness of the Catholic party. The wanton massacre of innocent Huguenots by the soldiers of the Duke of Guise aroused Protestants everywhere in France, and plunged the country into a succession of civil wars which ended only with the accession to the throne of Henry IV.

In these wars the Huguenots acted mainly in self-defence and took up arms chiefly for the protection of those who were being wantonly persecuted, even Coligni enlisting with reluctance and in answer to the tears and entreaties of his wife. It is unnecessary to recount all the incidents of the struggle, or to record all the plots and counter-plots, all the betrayals, and all the heroisms. The

stream of events was not like a slow-moving tide, but like a turbulent stream that often turns on itself, and only after dashing over the rocks that obstruct its course finally reaches the sea. The event destined forever to outrank all others in horror and infamy was the notorious massacre of August 24th, 1572. So alarmed by the ascendancy which the noble Coligni, by the grandeur of his character, had gained over the king, Catharine, the queen-mother, instigated the Guises and others to plot his assassination. The first attempt resulted only in a wound, but nothing daunted, the conspirators now filled the mind of the king with frightful stories of Protestant plots for his overthrow, and finally persuaded him to sign the death warrant of Coligni. "Then," in frantic tones, Charles cried, "let not a Huguenot live to reproach me for the perfidy of such a deed." They took him at his word and the work of blood began on the evening before "St. Bartholomew's Day," and ended with the slaughter of two thousand in Paris, and more than twenty thousand throughout France. The report of the massacre was greeted in Rome by the *Te Deum*, and in Madrid with shouts of joy.

In all other countries, both Catholic and

Protestant, the atrocity was regarded with horror. Liberal Catholics advocated toleration, and Henry III., in 1576, two years after his inauguration, granted complete religious freedom outside of Paris. But, under pressure of the Guise faction, this policy was abandoned, and again the wars went on until the succession of Henry IV., 1589. The king, to secure the consent of the Catholics, and avoid bloodshed, adopted by an act of outward conformity the religion of Rome, but inwardly kept his views unchanged and adhered to his purpose to protect the Protestants. Nine years later, in 1598, came the famous Edict of Nantes, by which the Huguenots secured some measures of that religious freedom for which they had maintained such an heroic struggle, several fortified cities being left in their hands as a guarantee for their security.

The interruption of the reform movement which at one time seemed about to sweep over all Europe was due in part to the wars of religion, in part to divisions between the Protestants themselves on theological questions; in part, to a wholesome change in the Catholic church in respect both to moral improvement and a deepening of real reli-

gious zeal within that body, and in part to its freedom from internal divisions and consequent swiftness and strength of efforts for defense and aggression. For these reasons the organized movement of reform was shut into narrower bounds and accomplished less than had been hoped from it.

The Reformation is historically traceable throughout its whole course, from the earliest inception to a fairly definite conclusion. It lies between the beginning of the sixteenth and the middle of the seventeenth centuries, so far as the life of the event is concerned. It had, like all historical events, a limited career, but as Guizot remarks, it has a hold upon the past and all the future. In this aspect it has no bounds save those of the development of the human race. It may be said, therefore, of the Reformation, that while it culminated in the Peace of Westphalia, in 1648, its influence went on working silent and unobserved changes in men's thinking and in their mutual relations in Church and State. The process is not yet complete and will not be until pure religion and perfect liberty shall be established throughout the whole world.

CHAPTER VII

THE ENGLISH REFORMATION

The religious reformation of England occupied nearly the same period as the reformation in continental lands; but it has features all its own. Indeed its course and characteristics are so very unlike those pertaining to the revolution across the channel as to require study by themselves. The movement was both political and religious. The rupture between England and Rome was made in an issue between the sovereign of a State and the sovereign of a Church; but that rupture had both antecedents and sequences. Slower to awake, the English Reformation was more fundamental and thorough than that which was reshaping the religious life of Western Europe. Although more than a decade went by after Luther began his agitations before England showed signs of laying aside loyal obedience to the Pope, there had been for generations, a strong, though silent current setting in the direction of freedom and enlightenment, and destined in the end to accomplish more

than was signalized by the Treaty of Westphalia. The movement was to ripen into Puritanism.

Puritanism was the reformation of the Reformation. It was the second stage of that distinctive movement. It was an advanced chapter in the book that tells of the making over of the Christian Church after the convulsions of the early centuries and the stagnation of the middle ages. The theater of the first Reformation was the continent, that of the second was the island kingdom of Britain. The first movement was fundamental. It resulted in throwing off the incubus of popery and priestcraft making possible individualism and faith; but in course of time it spent itself. The problem was too complex to be completely worked out in one field or in a single age. Disturbing elements and tendencies at length came in and the great spiritual forces which had given it power were dissipated. The reformation was unfinished. It crystallized too soon and needed to be broken up by a second revolution.

This later overturning in the interest of liberty and righteousness, was much more protracted than was the Lutheran reformation, and fortunately, the whole movement

from inception to completion can be traced more clearly through the centuries. But it can be fairly understood only by those who are willing to exercise patience in the study of a condition of society, church and state, painfully unlike our own. Hasty prejudice and censorious criticism are alike unfitted to lay bare the whole truth. We must go back to the study of earlier and cruder times with sympathy and enthusiasm, forgetting the acquirements of our own generation and walking in generous friendship with men who were doing their best under limitations and complications of which we may never have dreamed.

If we are willing to do this we can put ourselves in the way of a far better understanding of the Puritans than could their contemporaries in the reign of Charles II. We can get perspective and proportion, light and shade. We can appreciate difficulties and weigh tendencies, we can discount failures and honor motives; we can exercise pity and generous consideration for those who wrought out at great sacrifice the advantages which we have inherited. We go back in thought, from a time of civil and personal liberty and of religious freedom, from an age of general intelligence and

prosperity, of secure peace, of prevalent good will, from a generation that at least makes a boast of tolerance and hopefulness, to a time when all these things were conspicuously wanting. We go back to ages of ignorance, prejudice, bigotry, of despotisms and oppressions, of cruel imprisonments and tortures, to times of moral corruption when life was tainted in the home, in social gatherings, even in the so-called Christian church; when the head of the Church was a royal libertine; the bishops idle, luxurious, and subservient; the clergy vicious and uneducated; the rich covetous and oppressive; when superstition clung to the simplest offices of religion and hypocrisy lurked beneath priestly vestments. We have been too much out of sympathy with the stern Puritan who clung with stupid and obstinate conscientiousness to moral and religious tenets often unlovely or insignificant; but now we see that he was made severe and unrelenting by the times in which he lived. He was compelled to set his face like a flint against customs which were irretrievably evil. There was for him as a conscientious and earnest man no possible compromise, no half-way grounds, no concessions, no relaxations. He was as one who pulls his

boat against a mighty current. If he dawdled at the oars he drifted with the tide of evil. The Puritan was under compulsion to be zealous and unrelenting, leaving the gentleness and the amenities of life to a day whose dawning was not for his weary eyes to see.

The name was invented and first applied during the reign of Elizabeth, but the movement which was then christened Puritanism began in time more remote in protests and struggles against enforced limitations in the exercise of religion. It has often been referred to as if it were a convulsion of human nature, an outburst in social and religious life, a startling phenomenon of a certain period of English history. On the contrary it made its approach by insensible steps, finally, it came to a culmination, and after a time it passed away. The bud was formed, the flower blossomed, then the withered petals fell to the ground.

Be it remembered that the form of Christianity introduced into England, in the days of Gregory the Great, bore the stamp of Rome. At the very first it was marked by superstition, formalism, external authority. Yet under the efficient reign of good King Alfred there was an appreciable gain in

intelligence and manliness. Alfred complained that not a priest south of the Thames could translate Latin or Greek into his mother-tongue, and he gave himself to the task of lifting the ideals of the people, by educating their leaders. Schools were established, and the University of Oxford was founded. After his death something of a reaction set in, and under the baleful influence of St. Dunstan the period following was characterized by superstition and low spirituality. In a couple of centuries William of Normandy brought into play new forces which, on the whole, worked for a higher civilization and against papal influences. But when he passed from the stage there sprang up "a crop of more pliable kings" whom the popes could use. Among these was King John, the weakest and basest tool of the papacy.

It is not until we come to Edward III. (1327-1377), one of the most vigorous and statesmanlike of English sovereigns, that we find any active resistance to the tyranny of Rome. It was during his reign that Wyclif began his preparatory work for the great reformation which was to follow two centuries later. He has been aptly called "the father of dissent from Rome and the progenitor of

the Puritans." From him came "the first breath of healthy doctrine that had passed over England for many a weary day." Well versed in the philosophy and learning of the day he became the discoverer of a new moral world. His translation of the Bible from priestly Latin into vernacular English gave the people access to vital truths without the intervention of a priest.

The awakening the popular mind to new thoughts and standards, which he accomplished, was the inauguration of that great movement which culminated in the glorious revolution under the Prince of Orange three centuries and a half later.

Ten years after the death of Wyclif Lollardism, the fruit of the preaching by his "Poor Priests," threatened to overturn the religious life of England. In this humble democratic movement we find the first recognition of a minister as qualified for his office by virtue of the Scriptures and without dependence on Rome or Councils. The movement touched all classes, the ploughmen, the grim-visaged men-at-arms, and the nobles of the court. It is true that persecution under the heavy hand of the foreign oppressor held it somewhat in check, but the principles which had come from Wyc-

lif's Bible were scattered far and wide, in spite of all attempts at suppression. The enemies of progress might wreak their impotent rage upon the disinterred body of the reformer and scatter his ashes upon the moving waters but that would only symbolize the spreading of the truths he had inculcated. As the quaint Fuller has put it—"Swift hath conveyed his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wyclif are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over."

Thus we come in our hasty review to the beginning of the sixteenth century and the significant reign of Henry VIII. The door now opens upon modern history. As Bolingbroke declared: "In this new era all those events happened which have produced so vast a change in the customs and interests of European nations, and in the whole policy, ecclesiastical and civil, of these parts of the world." The great movement which we are endeavoring to trace was intimately connected with all the events which mark the quickening of the human mind and the enlargement of human enterprise. / Now came the invention of printing, the peopling

of new lands, the development of new commercial undertakings, the dispersion of learned men, the spread of revolutionary ideas. In England a host of men were quickened by the teachings of Luther and Zwingli and longed for a reformation of the religious life. Latimer, at Cambridge, maintained that the Bible should always be read in the vernacular. Closely following him were the two illustrious scholars, Ridley and Cranmer, both of whom insisted upon the supreme authority of the mind. The revolution which they inaugurated would have come a score of years earlier but for the tremendous influence of Cardinal Wolsey, who, as the determined enemy of the Reformation, controlled England in the interest of his unscrupulous master and the Pope. At last, personal questions separated Henry from the papacy, making him curse Pontiff and Cardinals, and barricade England against Rome. Whereas, hitherto, all protests against the errors of the Roman church had been met "with frowns and frets, with fire and faggot," the way was now open for free-minded lovers of a simple Bible religion to take their stand against priestcraft. The best part of the whole movement was the opening of the Scriptures to many

minds, for the royal proclamation of 1537 declared in favor of the English Bible, thus giving the truth of God free course into minds hitherto dull and unspiritual. Those who came under the power of the Bible maintained the struggle for liberty of thought and conscience. D'Aubigny recognized this source of new life and hope, declaring that: "The Reformation in England to an even greater extent than that of the continent was effected by the Word of God." There were no commanding leaders like Luther, Calvin or Zwingli, but the Bible, itself widely circulated, accomplished the work of spiritual reformation.

It is easy now to see the blunder made by the English Reformers in continuing to acknowledge the king as head of the church. We readily exclaim: Why should a church which claims a divine master as its head be made dependent on royal assent! If it has the higher leadership and is endowed with the prerogative of free conscience why submit itself to the whims of an impulsive and erratic sovereign! But the times were not ripe for such advanced doctrine, and Henry took the place in the church once held by the expelled Pope, and hence the whole enterprise of working out purity and sim-

plicity became a complicated one. Convocations composed of members more or less servile and conscienceless, were called by royal mandate; and every deliverance was in a measure tainted by the baleful influence of men inclined either to papacy or irreligion. There could be no general harmony. Two parties of radically opposed factions were gradually developed; one party holding hard and fast by the old ways, the other eager to achieve a more complete reformation. Hot debates were always in order, usually ending in a compromise of radical differences, in which "Popery and Protestantism kissed each other." Scripture and the early creeds were, however, recognized, and the doctrine of justification by faith asserted; but the existence of purgatory was not denied, auricular confession was tolerated, and the use of images of the saints for certain specified purposes was permitted. Although much was gained, seeds of trouble were left in the soil to germinate for a future harvest time. Neither party could be satisfied. The problem had not been fully solved. Reformers were distressed over the papist ingredients remaining in the confessions; while the Romanists treated the articles which bore the royal

sanction with undisguised contempt and scouted the ecclesiastical supremacy of the new Head of the Church. Meanwhile, there was, of course, confusion and contradiction in the preaching of the pulpits, some continuing in the old papistic doctrine and interpretation, others proclaiming a simpler and more spiritual way. So it went on through the long reign of Henry, the royal influence turning more and more toward popish methods, and affording occasion for a deeper and more radical work on behalf of religious liberty.

The reign which followed became a memorable one, for in it began a movement for non-conformity to the established order of worship, which afterward proved to be the very seed-germ of Puritanism. The king was but a boy of ten at his coronation, and at his death, in 1553, had lived but sixteen years. The real direction of affairs must have come from the power behind the throne, and fortunately this was in favor of the Protestant enterprises. Some articles of oppression passed during the later years of his father were reversed, exiles were brought back, and worthy men exalted. Special provision was also made for a higher order of preaching throughout the

kingdom, and a new Service Book was introduced for church worship. All might have gone well and the advance toward a better state of things might have been signal but for the attempt to enforce these changes by harsh legislation. No other doctrines could be preached; no other Book of Service could be used; no word could be uttered even by way of criticism, save on pain of fine and imprisonment. It has been well said that "these enactments present the saddest and most illogical of farces—a Protestant Inquisition." The advocate of the free gospel had turned persecutor, only to fail dismally. Not even the Bible can be forced into unwilling hands; the best of prayer-books cannot be made an aid to devotion under threats and penalties. "Nothing prejudices like compulsion." The thumb-screw and the stocks never made converts. It is no wonder, therefore, that though Cranmer and his supporters were zealous against the flagrant evils of Romanism, they succeeded only in driving into revolt those who would otherwise have been cordially acquiescent. There was not a Protestant in the land who would not have applauded the changes which had been introduced, if only their free judgment had been respected.

The half dozen years of the reign of Edward VI. were fruitful in beginnings only, and when his early, and, perhaps, untimely, death, opened the way for Mary to ascend the throne "a vile flood of popery swept over England." It will not be necessary to chronicle the horrors of her bloody reign, the darkest and dreariest in English history. She came into power giving uncounted promises to create no disturbances, but from the first, under the influence of her husband, Philip of Spain, her heart was pledged to the Romish motto, "No faith to be kept with heretics," and to that secret pledge she was unflinchingly true. Protestant pulpits were shackled, popish bishops were exalted. Both parliament and the Convocation of Clergy were packed with servile tools, and England was reconciled to Rome. Intolerance without a gleam of charity brooded over all her councils. The prisons were crammed with the victims of religious intolerance, and Smithfield regained the terrors in which it had been clothed in the days of Lollardism. Yet, strange to say, Protestantism lost nothing. As Hallan asserts: "A sort of instinctive reasoning taught the people that the truth of a religion begins to be very suspicious when it

stands in need of prisons and scaffolds to eke out its evidences." The reign of blood created in many breasts Protestant convictions; and, so it came about that the Puritanism which had been born in the favor of Edward flourished in spite of the ruthlessness of ruthless Mary.

The death of the queen, in 1558, set Rome aghast; raised the hopes of the Reformers, and delighted the refugees with the prospects of speedy return. England awoke as from a nightmare, and the terror of the hour of darkness was dissipated, for the scepter had come to the hands of Elizabeth, an avowed Protestant. The nation did well to rejoice, for the contrast of the reign of the new queen with that of her popish sister was amazing so far as all that pertains to prosperity and good order were concerned. The clear-minded and imperious daughter of Henry was an impossible subject for Rome.

For fifty years Protestantism was to have assured protection, and yet Puritanism was to find its development not through good fortunes and royal favors, but only by fighting its way toward power and privilege. Elizabeth would go as far as the most ultra Protestant in the matter of revolt against

popish interference with civil and religious affairs, but not one step in advance in other directions. There should be a well-ordered English church, subject in its government to her own dictation; but, that church could have no modification and no rival. When, therefore, the religious enactments of Mary had been repealed, the exiles brought back, and some new regulations issued for church service, the final limit had been reached, and Elizabeth set herself with hard and bitter heart against any further attempts at reform. She gloried in her ecclesiastical supremacy, and her temper brooked no contradiction. To her mind Puritanism was a "specially impudent innovation" tending to sap the very foundation of the church. Like her father, she indulged in vast assumptions of authority, and, in her arrogance, was impatient of any hint of independent thinking, on the part of others, even in matters least essential. She would tolerate no ministers in her pulpits who differed from her in opinion, and those who opposed her royal will she would not allow to depart in peace. Her bondage extended to every appointment, and to every official action. There could be no synod or convention of representatives of the people convened to regulate

matters of common interest. There could be no convocation of clergy save as assembled by royal command; nor could they then transact any business save by particular warrant.

In her attitude toward ecclesiastical affairs Elizabeth had but one end in view—the preservation of peace and the upbuilding of the authority of the crown. She is usually described as a Lutheran of moderate type, but John Richard Green declares that “no woman ever lived who was so totally destitute of the sentiment of religion.” So far as her personal convictions were concerned, the theological beliefs and controversies which swayed others left her intellectual and moral life untouched; but for the sake of unity throughout the kingdom she demanded conformity, overriding the conscience and judgment of her subjects in utter indifference to the religious scruples upon which she trampled.

The immediate result of this severity was to scatter over the continent men of learning and high character, especially ministers of the prohibited faith. They sought out centers of religious thought in the cities of Germany, Switzerland, and France. In due time they came back or wrote to friends and

thus the freest and most advanced ideas of the Reformation were planted in English soil.

So it came about that whether the ruler was Papist or Protestant, Puritanism grew apace. The people became more and more intelligent, thoughtful and independent, and were less easily harried into conformity to any established order of worship. The universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the great metropolis, and even the country at large, began to lean toward Puritanism. There was no open uprising in behalf of the movement which had now been christened by its historical and immortal name, but the leavening process went on in spite of all opposition. The press multiplied books and pamphlets and the new ideas were sown broadcast. The people with Saxon love of fair play, and with awakened intelligence were beginning to say, "If the bishops did not fear discussion they would not padlock free speech." So they opened their ears to the new doctrines of a complete reformation.

Furthermore, some of the measures for suppression worked in unlooked-for ways, in the interest of Puritanism. Ministers who had been dismissed from court were taken as private tutors into families of the middle

class and of the gentry. Here protected from oppression they did not fail to imbue many minds with hatred for tyranny, and with passion for political and religious liberty.

It is to be noted, however, that the Puritans in Elizabeth's time were not Dissenters, they were not even Presbyterians. They belonged to the English church, and there they proposed to stay. All they asked was the complete reform of that church. At first, even the most advanced among them were non-conformists only in respect to deviation from some prescribed regulations in the performance of public worship. They did not ask for liberty to withdraw from the national church, but only for liberty within the church, to which they fondly clung, to worship according to their own ideas of Christian simplicity and purity. As to the principle of national authority in church matters, that was not a grievance save as it came in conflict with conscientious ways of thinking. The party which went so far as to desire a break with the national church, adopting as a motto, "Reformation without tarrying," became known as "Separatists."

These broke away from the more conservative Puritans and stood out for a prin-

ciple of their own, the independence of the individual church, and finally wrought out their scheme of church government as Pilgrims upon the New England shores. The greater number of the reformers, however, continued as Puritans, in a definite party, committed to the national church, but refusing to accept regulations which they considered dangerously defiling. This gave ground for the sarcasm of the bishops who sneered at them as over-zealous for purity, and hated them as branded "Puritans."

The Tudors were followed by the Stuarts, and the movement which had steadily grown since the brief reign of Edward VI. continued to flourish under the new dynasty which it was destined at last to overthrow. It will not be needful to detail the histories of the four kings who had yet to play their parts before the great revolution. Not one of them had a respectable character, entertained an honest purpose, or did a creditable deed. They have been called "the Bourbons of British politics," and like their namesakes across the channel lived only to see and hate what they could not prevent, wasting their impotent rage upon the irresistible movement of human society toward true liberty.

When James I., the son of poor Mary Stuart, came to England the Puritans were jubilant. He had been bred a strict Presbyterian and stood pledged to the best type of Protestantism by many an oath. But the Puritans had reckoned without their host. The more James knew of Puritanism the less he liked it. On close acquaintance it smacked to him of republicanism; for was it not always casting eyes toward civil liberty and indulging in criticisms that did not spare even royal tenets. So James gave his right hand to the bishops, and honored Puritanism by deserting it. This vainest of men, and most pedantic of kings was bound to have his own way in religious as well as political matters, so he insisted on arguing in the imperative mood, believing that a command was better than a syllogism, and forbidding any indulgence in non-conformity. "I will have one doctrine," he declared, "and one discipline, one religion in substance and ceremony." He went still further and cried, "I will make the Puritan party conform or I will harry them out of the land." In a speech before Parliament he referred to "the sect called Puritan" as "insufferable in any well-governed commonwealth." So he adopted measures of sup-

pression. Non-conforming clergymen were silenced, imprisoned, or exiled; ecclesiastical censorship of the press was exercised; the importation of foreign books was hindered, yet by all these repressive measures he succeeded only in giving a more vigorous life to the party he held in contempt.

When the lines of battle were drawn, the monarch, with the state church were on one side, the Puritan clergy and the people on the other, with Parliament standing between, yet steadily drifting toward the side of political and religious liberty.

The first Charles succeeded the first James, but he was merely a second Stuart, with no new qualities of value to society. He was an improvement on his father only in respect to personal living, being orderly and chaste. In political action he was governed by the sole idea of absolutism. He utterly failed to read the portents of his time, or to mark the drift of public opinion. In affairs of government he stood unflinchingly against Parliament, and, in religious matters cherished the deepest aversion to Puritanism. Inflated with arrogance and pride he maintained a hopeless conflict with the mighty force of popular sentiment represented by Parliament, and, with the mightier force of

a great religious reformation. With the tyrannical and despicable Laud in control of ecclesiastical affairs he continued to the bitter end in a mad crusade against the liberties and sentiments of a people daily becoming more intelligent and independent. An open rupture was inevitable, and the reader of English history is scarcely surprised to come upon the unique chapter which records not only the dethronement but the execution of an English king.

This catastrophe could never have been brought about, even by the genius of Oliver Cromwell, had it not been for the tremendous force of the moral uprising of the people under the impulses which Puritanism had fostered. The ideas which were germinant in the days of Edward III. and Wyclif, which had begun to have life in the short reign of Edward VI., which were developed and publicly named in the time of Elizabeth, which endured the contemptuous opposition of two Stuart kings, at last asserted themselves in the indignant rejection of Charles I., and in the elevation to a Protectorship of the realm of a sturdy yeoman, who had passed from the House of Commons to the head of a victorious army.

The rule of Cromwell, however, lacked

popularity and was not destined to enjoy a long life. It was strong and successful so far as the maintenance of order and freedom from oppression were concerned. It gained and held the respect of the nation, and for that matter, of all Europe; yet, the Protector was often compelled to resort to the arbitrary and unconstitutional exercise of power, and, in spite of unquestioned integrity and splendid statesmanship, he failed to maintain himself at the height of popular favor. Between the Cavaliers and the Roundheads was a mass of people adhering steadfastly to neither party, sometimes remaining neutral and sometimes swaying to the one side or to the other. When they inclined toward the Puritans they made the victories of Cromwell possible; when they supported the Royalists Charles II. was recalled from exile and introduced into Whitehall with all England shouting welcome to the new king.

This was a step backward; darkening days came again, and the mutterings of another storm were heard in still unreformed England. Charles was a fool, a weakling, and a bigot, "an infidel when well, a Romanist when sick." The papists bestirred themselves under encouragement from the king's vacillating attitude; the high church party

pressed to the front and the Puritans were crowded out of pulpits and public offices. The hand of iron and blood began to show itself again. Many were banished from the realm; half of those that remained were outlawed, and under the reign of terror that ensued men of piety and free conscience were secure in possession of neither home nor life. It was the story of the catacombs over again, and Puritans met by stealth and under pitiful perils in dark alleys, upper garrets, and in midnight forests.

In 1685 Charles died and his brother, James II., came to the throne. The characteristics of the new king were bigotry and absolutism. In personal character he was vicious; in temper, always despotic; a liar when it suited him; vindictive and cruel when the mask was thrown off. Such a ruler was sure to march fast toward dethronement in so late a century. With "a despotism bolder than that of Elizabeth and meaner than that of Charles," he could not fail to set all parties against him, whether in high church circles or in Puritan ranks.

There would have been an even speedier revolution had not England had in prospect the succession of Mary, daughter of James, who was educated a Protestant and was the

wife of William, Prince of Orange. The report of the birth of a son to the queen, though not really credited, so inflamed all parties, Whigs, Tories, Churchmen and Puritans, that the king was forced to abdicate in favor of his daughter and her husband. All parties united in inviting to the English throne the most remarkable man of the epoch, thoughtful, simple, dignified, "an able captain, a wise statesman, a tolerant Christian."

Without bloodshed a new dynasty was set up; the glorious revolution of 1688 became an accomplished fact; temporal and religious liberty were secured, and the mission of the Puritans, as a party, came to an end.

Even so rapid a review of the religious history of England awakens its own suggestions regarding the philosophy of the great events which marked the course of things. Yet, it may be well to put into definite form the ruling ideas which determined actions so utterly abhorrent to the sentiments of our own age.

In the first place, men, Papists and Puritans alike, labored during all these troubled centuries under the mistaken notion that it is the province of the state to manage the affairs of the church. This was the source

of endless oppressions and complications, and much abuse of power by unprincipled rulers. Such wrongs are persistent, for new ideas come slowly. There is an heredity of false notions, like those which made slavery so long a possibility; which transmitted the doctrine of the "divine right of kings"; which still countenances the selfish use of wealth; and which gave government a right to dictate in the realm of ethics and religion, as well as in civil affairs. The Roman church had always meddled with statecraft, and, when the English reformation took place there was merely a transference of sovereignty in such matters from the Pope to the King. The bishops who inaugurated that revolution had been brought up in this doctrine, and, as a matter of course, carried over their allegiance to the new authority. What they rejoiced in was that the cathedrals which had echoed to the chanting of the mass, now resounded to the worship of the Service Book. It probably never occurred to Elizabeth, that, in questions of religion any more than in questions of politics, the people had any right to think and act for themselves. The English church was a national church. It had been formed under a civil code, by the sanction of the king,

and, up to the days of William and Mary, it was expected that the civil government would attend to the administration of its affairs.

Although they were fundamentally wrong in their conception of the function of government, the error was not easy to detect. Generation after generation, the theory had prevailed that the best government was the most obtrusive, and, in this particular, the Puritans were not greatly in advance of their time. Like the Jews of old, they were in religion nationalists to the core. They held that a Christian nation is a Christian church; and this false idea was translated to the new England across the seas, and, for a century and more, interfered with the development of both civil and religious order. The Puritan notion was not liberty, as now understood, but only reform. They were not initiatory or revolutionary, for they never denied the rights of government in the church; they were only urgent to have the government permit them, and compel all others, to walk in ways of simplicity and purity.

Another prevailing idea and favorite battle-cry was "Conformity." Difference of belief and custom was the bug-bear which

frightened kings, bishops, and presbyters, into spasms. If it were not so painfully pathetic it would be laughable in the extreme to look upon men, great and small, in throes of terror over the inevitable differences of human minds about incidental matters; when, in things fundamental, they were all agreed. It was universally held that God was to be worshiped, and that the Bible was the book of divine truth, but the rulers were not content so long as in the minutest details men failed of conformity. The idea of tolerating variance of opinion, in charity and confidence, was as remote from the age as the use of electricity for light and power. Men who for the right to exercise private judgment suffered imprisonment and faced death, were either too timid or too narrow to grant the same right in turn to men who differed from them. Most strange to relate, the very men who proved themselves heroes for the maintenance of their own faith, counted tolerance of differing opinions in others a culpable weakness. They were under an evil spell. Each man was bound to discover the right, and then he was equally bound to force his convictions on every other man.

A third notion as baleful, and more sense-

less, was the idea that physical force could be successfully used to change or modify intellectual convictions. Stubborn adherence to this error opened a fountain of blood which flowed continuously for four or five centuries. The inconsistency of such reasoning seems to have scarcely crossed men's minds. Tyrants persecuted according to the measure of their cruelty, and martyrs suffered according to the degree of their heroism. At times the land was full of darkened homes, the air rent with cries of horror, the fields wet with the blood of saints, but there was no effective protest against the unreason of such acts of barbarity. The only question was as to whether the attempts were misplaced, whether force was being used on the right side.

Under Henry VIII. lives were counted cheap enough, but even under the better reign of his son, Edward, conformity was enforced by pains and penalties. Many oppressive statutes were repealed, but the Roman clergy who refused to accept Protestantism were pitilessly thrown into prison. In Mary's reign Protestants multiplied under the cruelties which she sanctioned; but the logic of it was not seen, and the last

days of her terrible reign were the darkest of all. The liturgy adopted in the reign of Elizabeth was intelligible and admirable, but it occurred to no one that what had been hailed with delight by many ought to be allowed to win its own way by its moral worth and spiritual beauty. It must be forced at once upon all by such penalties as the exigency of the case might demand.

The same appeal to force was made in small matters as in large. Nothing was too unessential to constitute a heresy, and to call for the use of force. About the middle of the sixteenth century an unhappy woman was left in prison a whole year for the offence of holding a peculiar notion concerning the mode of incarnation; which, as a fact, she seems not to have denied. At the end of that time neither Cranmer nor Ridley having been able to win her mind to their view, she went to the stake without protest from them, they being willing in their turn to pass through the same fiery torture for opinions which they had thought fit to adopt. It mattered not what personal worth lay behind the heresy; the sweetest disposition, the most upright living went for nothing; nobody could be trusted whose opinions were wrong,—that is to say, wrong

in the eyes of those who had the power to employ force. Bishop Hooper, who suffered a distressful death in 1555, is described as the most apostolic of men, a man who in an age of almost universal covetousness not only lived simply but gave away most of his income. Rowland Taylor, whom the fiery chariot of martyrdom bore aloft in the same year, was proclaimed, "a right perfect divine, of warm heart, simple manners, touching humility and holy zeal." But the shame of using cruel force against men of such character and kindly service seems not to have occurred to any one. It was a hard age. Ideas of gentleness, patience, and fair dealing had absolutely no place in men's minds. The premises had been accepted once for all that heresy must be crushed at any cost, and that force was the natural means to be employed.

When we make up our verdict on the merits and the faults of the Puritans it behooves us to exercise the charity and fairness which were foreign to their age, but are the priceless property of our own. We mention with hesitation and almost apologetic tone the faults which to our finer senses of things are so glaring. They lacked gentleness and compassion; they

were wanting in joyousness and their lives were pitifully barren of amenities; they failed to discriminate between things hopelessy bad and things redeemable by a pure heart; they ignored the natural demand of the mind for beauty; and they trampled upon the instinct for recreation and pleasure. In a word, they had no adaptability. They knew not how to yield to a whim or to modify a custom. They were hard and unbending, and so developed no traits of loveliness. They were too severe toward themselves and too rigid in their judgment of others. For all these faults they stand condemned. Their sentence has gone out through all the earth. Their sins were such as men are slow to forgive and slower still to forget.

On the other hand, taking into account the conditions of their age,—their merits are as easily noted as their faults and more gratefully held up to view. First of all, and let it be written in letters of gold, we record their sturdy moral sense. They had a sensitive conscience, and to what they deemed to be right they were devoted for life and in death. Nor did they act under the fostering influence of public opinion and chaste customs, but often in the face of a

sneering and frowning world that laughed at their scruples and hated them for the rebuke of its vileness. It is difficult, if not actually impossible, for men of this age, when virtue is exalted, when chastity and honesty are demanded by pulpit and press, when good men and pure women uphold the loftiest moral standards, to conceive of the universal and awful corruptions against which the Puritans protested. In the reign of Edward VI., when Puritanism was born, the morals and manners of the people were almost universally bad. The higher classes were insatiably covetous, grasping at public lands and hoarding gold, while in the lower ranks, crime of all sorts stalked abroad brazen and unpunished. The court of Elizabeth was full of epicures and atheists. Half the churches, even in London, were without preaching; social conference meetings were suppressed; alehouses abounded; gaming and frivolity were the order of the day. Sundays were devoted to plays and rude sports, and, when Parliament passed a bill for a more reverent use of the Sabbath, Elizabeth refused to sign it, not tolerating any interference with religious matters. James was willing to enlist the natural levity of the human heart in his battle

against Puritanism, and issued a proclamation encouraging on Sunday such "lawful sports" as dancing, archery, vaulting or May games. Macaulay says of the times of Charles: "Then came the days never to be recalled without a blush, days of servitude, sensuality and gigantic vices." The Puritans are justly accused of severity in morals, but the brighter world of to-day ought not to stint its admiration for men who could, in the face of customs honored by king and court, and against tendencies which characterized society, stand unflinchingly for honesty and cleanness, for true and sturdy manhood, sweet and pure womanhood.

Quite in keeping with their moral sense was their soulful energy. While others were dawdling away their days, while leaders in church and state were intoxicated with ambition and pleasure, they found something to live for. Their's was "the strenuous mood." There were mighty reforms to be pushed through, there were vital problems to be settled, there were evils to be overcome, there were advantages to be won for the good of society, and with uncompromising zeal and unfaltering courage they gave themselves to their accomplishment. They met with constant opposition, and encountered

difficulties without number. It was no holiday affair to live Christianly on any day from Edward VI. to James II. But the energy of the Puritans was unflagging. Eager, bold, aggressive, they were reformers not by the king's behest, not in formal compliance with changed fashions, but because their own hearts and minds were enlisted in the work. They would not cease to be intense and energetic in their striving until church and society had been carefully reformed, until simplicity and purity had become the universal rule of life.

Puritanism, as an organized party, and a recognized force among men, has, for two centuries been only a matter of history. It is inconceivable that conditions of human society should ever again give birth and development to such a movement. We have passed beyond such measures as were then adopted for the reform of church and state. But some things that pertain to the essence of Puritanism are of perpetual value to human society, and of eternal fitness to human character. Men ought forever to be earnest and devoted in their adherence to the right; clear-headed and persistent in handling problems of government and religion. They ought to go yet further, further perhaps

than was possible to men of the earlier centuries, and to clear thinking and earnest action they should add not only love of liberty, deep charity and broad toleration, but also an appreciation of beauty and the innocent joy of living. Thus they will build worthily on foundations which heroes have laid; thus they will reap rich harvests for which martyrs sowed the seed.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MODERN ERA

The proper measurement of the present is by the past. More often we bring it into comparison with the future. That is to say, we test the present by our ideal of the state, of the church, and of personal character. This method has the advantage of making us discontented with the progress already made and eager for improvement. And this is well, for absolute contentment would mean arrest of progress; it would mean stagnation. On the other hand, the cure for discouragement and pessimism lies in contrasting the present with earlier stages of development. When we come to the study of prevailing conditions by a long and hard path leading through crude and dark ages, we recognize with gratitude and courage the immeasurable advantages of the days in which we live.

The period under consideration covers two centuries and a half, and is packed with interesting and significant incidents. Events crowd upon one another; and their record is indefinitely more comprehensive and

exact than in earlier times. The only feasible method of painting the characteristics of this section of human history is to ignore details and present an outline with the salient points as clearly indicated as possible.

By the middle of the seventeenth century political and religious lines were quite definitely settled. The Reformation was established on the continent and in England beyond the possibility of overthrow, and the process of nation building had gone far enough to indicate the boundaries which seem likely to endure the test of time.

Perhaps the most significant event in the modern era was the peopling of the New World and the maturing of the spirit of nationality in that northern continent. The discovery of America was made at the close of the fifteenth century, but wide and stormy seas shut it out from occupation for a hundred and fifty years. At the close of that period by virtue of oppression at home, the awakening of new energies and new dreams of conquest, the enterprise of settlement in the new lands began to be pushed with vigor, and to results of great moment to all the peoples of earth.

The Spaniards took possession of the southern coasts; the French of the northern.

Both were strongly Catholic and monarchical. The middle section with a climate favorable for an enterprising people, with varied resources in soil and minerals, with excellent harbors and navigable rivers, with possibilities of wide empire and unlimited development of wealth, was colonized by the Protestant nations of northern Europe and above all by Anglo-Saxons. In New England, were laid the foundations of a vigorous and expansive civilization in the establishment on the Massachusetts coast of the Puritans and Pilgrims. On the territory of Old England these two parties had differed not a little in characteristics and practical purposes. There the Puritans held to the old church and a state religion. The Pilgrims were more radical and as "Separatists" would have reform "without tarrying," crossing first the channel and then the ocean in search of a land of freedom. But once together on the soil of a new continent, breathing air untainted by oppressive traditions, they speedily came to one mind in important matters. The Puritan emigrants did not forget their "dear mother church." They brought with them ministers fully ordained; some of them like Higginson, Cotton and Hooker, being men of distinc-

tion, but on the shores of the new world they organized an ecclesiastical system in close resemblance to that which the parishioners and followers of the open-minded Robinson had already instituted in the Plymouth colony. It was an age of change, and movements toward a new order of things were rapidly and harmoniously executed. Some serious mistakes were made; as for instance, the limiting of political suffrage to church members. They were often hampered by the crudeness of society, but they were undoubtedly moved by high religious considerations, and always acted nobly if not wisely. They were legislating for "a commonwealth yet to be settled," not for one already matured, and, under the pressure not only of local exigencies, but of ideas at that time of universal prevalence, they bound the state to the church, and mingled functions that are better exercised in independence of each other. Yet, in spite of narrowness and blunders the development of the new civilization was in the direction of strength and freedom.

By 1640 no fewer than 20,000 Englishmen had come to the various colonies of New England; including eighty ordained ministers, of whom more than half were graduates

of Cambridge and Oxford. This accounts in part for the fact that education received almost as great attention as religion. Already the foundation of Harvard College had been laid, with grammar and common schools begun in both Massachusetts and Connecticut. These would seem crude enough in comparison with the perfected institutions which distinguish the twentieth century, but they were of immense value to the infant colonies, and of even greater significance with reference to the development of later periods. They indicated certain ambitions and tendencies which then, as now, were only limited by the boundaries of a growing nation.

Without upheavals or revolutions the changes in the religious life of Continental Europe during the modern period followed chiefly lines already established.

The reforms in Austria during the last quarter of the eighteenth century constitute one of the fascinating "might have beens" of history. Joseph II., 1781, issued an Edict of Toleration, and followed it up by important legislative acts looking toward the complete independence of the government in external matters, and the reducing of the jurisdiction of the Pope to the low-

est limits. In the controversy with Pope Pius VI. which followed, the Emperor was on the point of imitating the example of Henry VIII., of England, and breaking once for all with Rome, but was dissuaded by counselors whom he regarded as sincere and sagacious. If a deeper spirit of religious fervor had been abroad, as in the days of Luther, a revolution of incalculable significance might have been accomplished; but the temper of the nation was too light and skeptical for such a profound modification of relationships as the astute Emperor had in mind.

In the religious history of Germany during the eighteenth century an exalted place, if not the very highest, must be accorded to the Moravians. They were the inheritors of the ideas and purposes of the Hussites of the fifteenth century. They cherished the spirit of Christianity in simplicity and fidelity. The leader in this movement, a movement which indeed has not yet lost its moral and spiritual force, was Count Zinzendorf, who belonged to an old and wealthy family of Saxony. In the course of his education he had come under deep religious influences which determined his character and bent of purpose. Though forced for a

while to the study of law he found his way into the ministry, finally becoming an ordained bishop. He had no ambition to establish a new sect but only to intensify spiritual life within the national church. He sought to infuse into it new warmth and a deeper religious sentiment. His missionary zeal matched his love for simplicity and purity; and, partly by his own labors in Holland, England and America, and partly by the organization of which he was the moving spirit Gospel messengers were sent into all quarters of the globe.

Sweden made a distinct contribution to religious history in the gift to the world of Swedenborg, the son of a Lutheran bishop, who studied at the University of Upsala and became widely influential as a unique thinker and writer. Although not formally accepted as a leader in religious thought by a majority in any community, he impregnated with his ideas a large body of followers; and in no small degree modified the thought of the whole Christian world. Emanuel Swedenborg had his first vision of Christ when he was past fifty years of age. He had enjoyed rare advantages in the cultivation of his splendid powers, and was already a scientist of wide research, and of

literary productiveness. The contemplative habits of his youth brought forth large fruitage in the last thirty years of his long life. He must be credited with sincerity in believing himself the chosen recipient of revelations; and, whatever may have been his hallucination, he seems to have impressed men with the genuineness of his communications with angels, and even with the Lord himself. The genius of his religious system is found in his doctrine of analogies. The outer world corresponds to the inner being of man, as, indeed, the whole visible universe does with the invisible realm. Following this principle of interpretation it was natural for Swedenborg to find in the Bible three distinct meanings. One lies in the literal report of facts, the second is beneath the surface in occult allusions to spiritual realities of the kingdom, the third is heavenly and pertains to the Lord himself. There is no denial of Christianity, and no rejection of any of its moral precepts, although there is a somewhat significant modification of some of the doctrines; as, for instance, of the atonement and the resurrection. The Swedenborgian church came into existence in 1771 and, acting upon the promise of a new

heaven and new earth, assumed the name which it still bears, the "New Jerusalem Church."

In France, the most significant phase of the religious situation was persistent persecution of the Huguenots, and their final expulsion,—to the irretrievable loss of the country. After the death of Mazarin, Louis XIV., moved by a tormenting conscience and instigated by Catholic advisers, persecuted the Huguenots with unbearable cruelties and oppression, so that within three years not fewer than 50,000 families fled the country. In 1685 the Edict of Nantes, which had stood as the charter of liberty for Protestants, was revoked and more than a quarter of a million escaped from France in spite of all hindrances placed in their way, impoverishing their own country and enriching England, Holland and America, so that Voltaire could say, "the French are as widely dispersed as the Jews."

An event of great significance in the eighteenth century was the temporary and apparent overthrow of Jesuitism. Its beginnings had been, in spite of serious and almost fatal misconception of the genius of Christianity, sincere and earnest. But with the passing of the centuries, it had become

widely diverted from those original aims which had almost justified its right to exist. It had become ambitious for numbers of converts on the mission fields, which led to a fatal lowering of the standard of moral requirements; ambitious for power, which led to interference in the politics of nearly every government of Europe to the serious disturbance of people and rulers; ambitious for wealth, which led it to give time and energy if not unholy shrewdness to the development of commerce in its own interests. By the middle of the eighteenth century the society had succeeded in arousing against itself the deep-seated enmity of widely separated classes, so that it had no support in any against the antipathy of the others. The people distrusted it, kings feared and hated it, and the Popes, after long contentions against its methods, reluctantly concluded that it was hopelessly bad. The result of this widespread distrust and opposition was repeated edicts which suppressed it temporarily not only in the Catholic lands of Europe and America, but even on its mission fields.

Religious development was much more marked in England than on the continent. Certain phases of moral life and of philo-

sophical and theological thinking were apparently no more hopeful there than elsewhere; there was, however, a deeper undercurrent of religious feeling, a far more powerful revival of faith, a more pronounced aggressiveness, and a profounder revolt alike from skepticism and formalism in England than in any other country. It is to be remembered that the eighteenth century was one of free thought. Men rejoiced to be liberated from tyranny and superstition and hailed their day as one of brilliant promise. The new-found liberty led in the end to intelligence and fervor, but there was, for a time, sad lack of religious sincerity and zeal. Partly in consequence of theological differences and disputes men turned against creeds and ecclesiastical requirements. The intellectual activity of the period was notable, but its brilliancy cannot blind us to its sophistry and shallowness. France was the source of much of the thought and sentiment which prevailed throughout Europe. It was the period in which Voltaire, by the peculiar fascination of his literary style, greatly influenced men. Abundant excuses may be found for his temper toward a religion which was grotesquely presented to him in the ecclesiastic system of his day;

nevertheless, the deleterious effects of his own misjudgments must be acknowledged and deplored. A biographer has said of him that "he missed the peculiar emotions of holiness," that "he had no ear for the finer vibrations of the spiritual voice." Such a man could not fail to misinterpret Scripture, indeed, it is not unaccountable that he should have been moved by "vehement and blinding antipathy" to the Christian faith. Voltaire was followed by the "Encyclopedists," under the leadership of Diderot and D'Alembert, men of versatile talents and extensive learning, who labored with prodigious industry to disseminate the most advanced and revolutionary opinions of the time.

Running parallel with this destructive work of brilliant writers in France was that of the Deistic controversialists, who, for more than a century, influenced English thinking. The avowed purpose of men of this school of thought was to sweep away superstition; their actual influence far outstripped this laudable aim. They made bold to acknowledge the Being of God, but they robbed him of personality and approachableness. They vehemently denied the possibility of revelation and miracles,

not seldom resorting to insinuation and sarcasm in treating the evidences upon which Christian believers built their faith. Against the earlier theories strongly presented by Lord Herbert and Thomas Hobbes, the famous philosopher John Locke vainly developed his logical system. While maintaining the right of free inquiry and the duty of toleration he urged the "Reasonableness of Christianity" in a treatise which still commands profound respect. His powerful appeal failed to check the course of skeptical thinking. The century which followed, the eighteenth, was characterized by the nationalistic and destructive writings of such men as Lord Bolingbroke and David Hume, of acknowledged ability and of proclaimed hostility to religious belief, and the historian Gibbon, whose method was "to sap a creed with solemn sneer"

In spite of the "mocking disbelief coupled with profligacy," which made the higher circles of society in England, in that century, indifferent to the nobler aspirations and enterprises of men, the period is not to be viewed as altogether unproductive of thoughts and influences which tended toward the advancement of civilization. The an-

nals of the time record the discoveries of Sir Isaac Newton, the literary work of Addison and Johnson, the magnificent oratory of Burke and Pitt. It is on the ethical and religious side that the age was deplorable. During the greater part of the century, in both higher and lower ranks of society, there was a lamentable deficiency in purity, earnestness and faith. It is this condition of morals which makes so significant the inauguration of a social and religious movement, the influence of which is still unspent.

It would be difficult to overestimate the immediate and permanent influence for good to the whole world, morally and religiously, of the great revival of the eighteenth century in England, out of which came the unpremeditated organization of a new sect; for in Methodism there was an uprising and on-moving tide of religious life which brought recovery and renovation not only to England but ultimately, and, in a certain degree, to many other lands. The Methodist Revival came about in part by way of reaction against the skepticism and immorality which distinguished this century. Among the higher classes infidelity had been passionately espoused. Dean Swift, who had climbed to high position in the church,

through political influence, wrote: "Hardly one in a hundred among our people of quality or gentry appears to act by any principle of religion, nor is the case much better with the vulgar." About the middle of the century Bishop Butler declared that it had come to be taken for granted that Christianity was not even a matter of inquiry, but was looked upon as fictitious. Many political leaders, like Walpole, were guilty of unblushing immoralities; while among the lower classes lawlessness was prevalent.

Over against this religious skepticism and wickedness was set a style of preaching for the most part conventional. Stilted elegance had taken the place of unadorned simplicity. It was the rarest thing to find a preacher who dealt with the crying needs of the age, and the real sources of remedy. The Bible was uniformly treated in an apologetic tone; and, as Johnson put it: "the apostles were tried regularly once a week on the charge of having committed forgery." There were no convictions of religious truth and no enkindling appeals. What was needed was a new breath of life, and, fortunately, this was about to be supplied.

The awakening came chiefly through John

Wesley and his immediate helpers. The story need not be given in detail for it has been long familiar to the world, but it is interesting to note how persistent is religious life, and how the fire of truth is communicated by touch of one soul upon another. According to the confession of Wesley, the truth by which his own spiritual life was quickened, was found in the writings of William Law, the English mystic, to whom, therefore, belongs the honor of leading the way to this spiritual awakening. Wheresoever Law, himself, caught the spark of heavenly fire he communicated it to not a few, whom he induced to do their first earnest thinking on religion. He believed in personal fellowship with God, and in the attainment of oneness with God in moral character, and set the example of his teaching in holy living.

Out of his writings came the earliest inspiration to John Wesley, but later formative influences came from the Moravians, some of whom he met during a voyage to America and others two years later on his return to London. Martin Luther also contributed to the making of Wesley, for it was while Wesley was listening to the readings of the preface to Luther's Commentary on the

Epistle to the Romans that words about a free salvation awakened within him a feeling of joyful assurance of sins forgiven. Immediately upon this experience he began to preach in the city of London, and in the regions around, with unwonted fire and unexampled effectiveness. His brother Charles was equally advanced in the new life. Within the year George Whitfield, who, at college, had been associated with the brothers, began to preach in the open fields, with such pathos and tenderness that "tears might be seen forming white gutters" down cheeks blackened by the dust of the mines.

There was no thought of forming a new religious sect. As is well known, John Wesley was born and was ordained and even died in fellowship with the church of England, sadly deploring tendencies already bringing about a separation from the national church. Every schism in the Christian church is to be regretted and this one none the less because it was inevitable. It is always unwise to put new wine into old wine skins, for the old wine skins are sure to be ruptured by the fermentation of new life. The established church was too inert to respond to such zeal, and too self-contented to rise to the height of spiritual

privilege opening to it. But the enthusiasm for aggressive work among all classes refused to subside. The result was the outgrowth of a new system of church organization which now fills the earth; and the development of a spirit of earnestness which continues to leaven all denominations within the bounds of Christendom.

When we turn to our own country to study the leading phases of religious life we come at once upon an almost unaccountable delusion, namely, the belief in witchcraft. In the American mind witchcraft is often so closely associated with certain absurdities, and tragedies in connection with the Salem trials that its long and wide prevalence is overlooked. Sporadic as it may seem, it was, in truth, a lineal descendant of the magical wonders and mysteries of the Orient. By the early Christians strange phenomena were unhesitatingly attributed to the agency of demons. From the sixth to the twelfth century less of persecution appears against those who were believed to be possessed of satanic power simply because of belief in the defensive value of talismans. Yet, from that time there was a gradual increase of the delusion up to its climax at the close of the seventeenth century.

To our cool and critical view of such things, founded upon inductive science and common sense, it seems incredible that only two hundred years ago men and women were put to death by individual fury and by judicial processes for the crime of witchcraft, and yet, previous to the outbreak in the Massachusetts colony it is supposed that not fewer than 30,000 in England, 75,000 in France and 100,000 in Germany came to their death in this way. It was generally held that spirits of an evil character had communion with human beings who yielded to their malign influences, and who became, therefore, worthy of the severest penalties. Not only are some of the ablest ministers in old and new England on record in defense of the doctrine of devils and witchcraft; but also philosophers like Genvile, who was one of the earliest members of the Royal Society; physicians like Sir Thomas Browne; scholars like Ralph Cudworth; and jurists like Blackstone; and all that at so late a date as 1765. The process of recovery was gradual. Free thought and aroused intelligence dispersed this cruel and morbid obsession and, by the beginning of the following century, the delusion had utterly vanished.

While Methodism was developing in England, religious movements on the western side of the Atlantic were leavening and modifying the life of the churches. The intense zeal of Jonathan Edwards at Northampton produced the profoundest effects in the time of "the Great Awakening." Additions to the churches were numerous from all classes of the community. In New Jersey revivals of great power succeeded one another, in large measure through the eloquence of Whitfield, who was then on his second visit to America. Doubtless, there were many extravagances connected with these movements, and they were often foiled by disappointing reactions, yet the Christian life of the country was made more fervent and productive by this earnest and genuine interest in vital religion.

The growth of religious sects in the United States from the time of the Revolution was marked, although attended with a loss of support from the public treasury. Doubtless, there had been undercurrents setting in this direction before the war of revolution, but that struggle was productive of new zeal for the liberation of conscience and new impulses toward denominational activity. There lingered some statutory restrictions

upon the Baptists in New England and upon Roman Catholics outside of Maryland and a few other states, but these were destined to be removed. Patrick Henry, Jefferson and Madison were among the earliest advocates of entire religious freedom. When the constitution of the Federal Government came to be formed one article provided that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification for any office of public trust in the United States," and, to make assurance doubly sure, the first amendment added a provision that "congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." There have been important renderings from the Supreme Court to the effect that "general christianity," as distinguished from the tenets of any particular sect, is a part of the common law of the nation, in the sense that the Christian religion cannot be wantonly assailed. So far as the state is concerned all religious organizations, all Christians, and, indeed, all non-Christians of every shade of belief or denial, are granted full protection and absolute freedom within the bounds of good citizenship.

Under this wide liberty Christianity has steadily grown in numbers, in resources, in

intelligence, and in the excellence of the personal character of its adherents. Every denomination has, within the last century, recorded substantial advancement. The Roman Catholics at the close of the Revolution numbered less than 20,000, but to-day their communicants probably exceed eight millions. The Methodist church was then just beginning to exist as an organization, but after the lapse of a century it leads the list of Protestant sects with nearly six millions as a grand total of membership, gathered from its thirteen branches. The Baptists, who at that time had made only a hundred years of history and were just beginning to claim a place among the religious forces of the country, have crowded hard upon the Methodists with a membership of more than four millions. Then, in order of dimensions, come the Presbyterians, Lutherans, Congregationalists and Episcopalians, with a number of denominations following, respectable for strength of organization and high standards of thought and life.

Looking over the whole population of the world we find that not far from one-third of humanity is to be set down as under the general influence of Christianity; the proportion being about four hundred million

Christians to eight hundred millions of other religions. Yet, no statistics can give a just estimate of the potency of Christianity today. One must take into consideration the immense and significant changes in condition and outlook which have taken place since Christianity struggled for recognition in that great empire which for three centuries held it in contempt, or, for that matter, since the Reformation gave it freedom from the oppression of a corrupt and tyrannous hierarchy. Never was Christianity so free as now to develop according to its own genius, to assert itself by beneficent influence upon individual lives, and on the mass of society, and to extend itself at home and abroad by aggressive measures. The machinery has been devised and constructed for the propagation of Christian sentiments in all parts of the world. The educational institutions which are under the auspices of religion are varied and countless; its literature rich in exposition of Christian principles is not only immense but constantly increasing; means and measures for the spread of religion on every continent are highly developed; while the Bible has been translated into almost every known language and dialect. Moreover, the idea of aggres-

siveness is more and more taking possession of the Christian world, and may be regarded as, in some respects, the most characteristic feature of the religious life of the present century.

This brings us to the history of Christian missionary enterprise. The missions of the Roman Catholics have been pushed forward in every century with greater or less zeal and effect. Their methods have always been defective from a Protestant point of view, in that they seem to have aimed at little more than the superficial expression of Christianity. Under the Jesuits there have often been fatal accommodations to the low standards of morals prevailing in heathen communities. Nevertheless a noble army of Roman Catholic missionaries have exhibited pure devotion and unexcelled heroism. Among South Sea Islanders; in the heart of the Dark Continent; among the teeming millions of China; from the coast of India to the mountains they have worked assiduously; and in the face of discomfort, torture and death have displayed unshrinking fortitude.

Among Protestants one finds the most effective missionary service and the brightest instances of enthusiasm for the evangeli-

zation of the world. Missionary zeal did not declare itself at once upon the escape of the Church from the domination of Rome. Missionary activity was suspended a century before the Reformation. At best it had been sporadic, depending largely upon the zeal of the Pope or the devotion of individuals like St. Patricius and St. Columba. Sometimes the methods employed were exceedingly faulty, as, for instance, when military knights made conquest of Prussia and Poland; and when princes, with more zeal than piety or knowledge, put political constraint upon their subjects. At the time of the Reformation the Oriental lands and North Africa had been for a century under the sway of Islam, while some of the countries of Europe were only nominally Christian.

The Reformed churches were at first occupied with their own exigencies; and their missionary zeal was almost exclusively expended upon converting Catholics to the Protestant faith, and in securing greater liberty and more complete organization. Moreover, some of the leaders, including Luther himself, looked for the immediate "second coming" of the Lord, and seeing the end so near at hand felt small considera-

tion for the unconverted heathen. This was a sad legacy to the Lutheran Church, for when a century later any one suggested the formation of a special society for extending the benefits of the Gospel, his plans were rejected as a "dream" and all such expenditures of effort were looked upon as a waste, as indeed nothing short of casting "the holy things of God before dogs and swine." But Christianity is for the world, it is the ultimate religion for all mankind, and a return to the missionary aggressiveness of the first century was inevitable.

The missionary movement which places the present time above any since apostolic days, began to declare itself near the close of the eighteenth century. There were active forces and favorable conditions widely manifesting themselves, showing that the fullness of time had come for a mighty attack upon the entrenched heathenism of the world. During the middle ages there had been too much ignorance and confusion for vast missionary undertakings. Social and political disturbances had made organization for continuous work through incorporated societies out of the question. Then followed centuries of absorption in political and religious strife. Great problems which occu-

pied the attention and engaged the energies of Christians had to be worked out. But toward the close of the eighteenth century there was a renewal of evangelical religion and a quickening of human sympathies. As always, in art, philosophy, politics or religion there were choice and fiery spirits who went in advance of the masses, inspiring them and leading them on with clear thinking and undaunted zeal. These had caught the secret of Christian love and energy. While they mused the fire burned in their own souls and prepared them for leadership.

Among the first and greatest of these missionary leaders was William Carey, of undying fame, the son of a Northamptonshire schoolmaster. He was compelled to acquire an education through hindrances that would have discouraged one less eager for knowledge and usefulness. When he became a pastor he urged upon his brother ministers the project which had taken such hold upon his own heart—to give the blessed Gospel to the people who sat in the region of the shadow of death. At last he went himself to India, devoting himself to work, and for years, by word and example, stirring up others to interest themselves in the world's redemption.

In America the earliest foreign missionary efforts were made in 1810. These originated in a group of students at Williams College, who afterwards helped each other at Andover Seminary to shape the enterprise, and to present it to men of greater age and influence for their support. Missionary undertakings have not been limited to any denomination of Christians nor to any land of Christendom. Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, High and Low Church Episcopalians, have vied with one another in zeal and generosity. America and England have been foremost in the work, but Germany, France, the Netherlands and other Continental nations have also furnished men and money for vast undertakings. There are now not fewer than one hundred kindred societies working together in harmony to win the lost nations of the world to the Kingdom of God. In the prosecution of their noble work they have encountered difficulties simply enormous; language, customs, prejudices, have all stood in their way, but all these obstacles have been surmounted, and to-day there are 12,000 Christian missionaries against fewer than 1,000 a half century ago; and probably not fewer than 5,000,000 Christian converts

in heathen lands, with an ever increasing ratio of progress.

There exists no considerable people on the face of the globe in this first decade of the twentieth century among whom the Gospel is not being preached with developing power. It is true that hundreds of millions yet remain in savagery, or in the gloom of twilight revelations, but no people has been found to be beyond the subduing and quickening power of the gospel, and the prospect is a glowing one that another century will bring the majority of the human race under the direct power of Christianity.

The story of the Roman Catholic church in Europe during the last two centuries is one of constant fluctuation. There have been times when members of that communion were under political disability, as in England until the formal repeal of an ordinance against them, about 1830. Sometimes the very existence of the church has been threatened, as during the outbreak of the French revolution; and, later, under the repressive edicts of Napoleon I.; and sometimes its power has been seriously curtailed, as it was by the secularization of the ecclesiastical states of Germany, and by the abolishing of cloisters early in this century; but

on the whole this great organization has quite held its own against all influences, political and religious, and perhaps never did it give better promise of indefinite continuance than at the present time.

During the last half century two remarkable dogmas were established in the Roman church, in spite of the urgent opposition of scholarly and influential men of her own communion. In 1854 Pius IX. gathered a large company of ecclesiastics at Rome, and, acting upon his own responsibility without the concurrence of a council, promulgated the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, which had long been under discussion among the doctors of the church. In 1870, at an Oecumenical Council at Rome, the same Pope and his party, against strong and persistent opposition, made a declaration of Papal Infallibility. The minority opposed to the measure was large, but, for fear of schism, they at last yielded and the Council confirmed the dogma.

In nothing is the modern period more remarkable than in the development of religious liberty. The heritage of freedom has come to be by most minds accepted as a matter of course, but it is not to be forgotten that it has been bought with bitter strug-

gles. Intolerance was long in disappearing. Oliver Cromwell was one of the first to urge the absurdity of demanding liberty and not giving it, and he declared that he would not suffer one Christian to trample upon the rights of another. Yet even under the Commonwealth Roman Catholics were excluded from the privilege of voting, and holding office; and the use of the Prayer-Book was forbidden. There was no party that, having the reins of power given to it, would have done better. The advanced views of an individual like Sir Henry Vane, for instance, were acceptable to no body of men in the kingdom.

All through the eighteenth century there was a wavering in respect to legislation and practice. The Toleration Act was nominally in force, and yet even with the united efforts of Whigs and Latitudinarian Churchmen it was nearly impossible under the most favorable circumstances to legalize and sustain a policy of comprehension. By the Test Act, and various minor provisions, both Non-conformists and Roman Catholics were placed under disabilities, and even when a connivance at the invasion of restrictive laws had become the established rule, Parliament shrank from the broad assertion of religious

liberty, as the right of British subjects, and as the fixed policy of the State. Progress however there was, halting and unsteady, in the redress of one grievance after another, but it required a whole century of agitation to fully establish religious liberty.

The men who strove against oppression in England did not measure the significance of their struggle so far as general liberty of conscience is concerned. The idea and spirit of universal toleration did not possess them, and therefore they did not bring it with them to New England, where instances of intolerance were by no means wanting.

The most noted case of the suppression of an independent thinker occurred in connection with Roger Williams. After graduating from Cambridge, he took orders in the Church of England, but within five years had become in turn Puritan, Separatist and a Pilgrim to the shores of Massachusetts Bay. Successively engaged in preaching at Boston, Plymouth and Salem, he everywhere indulged in outspoken dissent from ecclesiastical or political procedure which displeased him. The colonists had crossed the sea for the sake of their religious convictions, but they knew not how patiently to bear with "diverse singular opinions," and,

although a man of force, integrity and kindness, who proved himself able to found and govern a State in spite of towering difficulties, Williams was summarily banished from the Massachusetts jurisdiction.

Another instance is found in the excommunication and banishment of the famous, not to say infamous, "Mrs. Ann Hutchinson," who brought with her from England a very active mind and a very free tongue, and who evidently excited sincere alarm in the minds of many leaders of the colony because of her free handling of some of the doctrines of the church, and because of her unrestrained criticism of the ministry. Her influence undoubtedly tended toward lawlessness and disruption.

Still another instance is found in the treatment of the Massachusetts Quakers. Many of the early disciples of Fox failed to exemplify that quietude and meekness which is now their characteristic and which was always properly connected with their doctrine of non-resistance. They were not seldom grotesque in behavior, and fanatically extravagant in the views which they proclaimed. They were condemned by the the General Court in 1657 as blasphemers against God, seditious and disturbers of

society. Some of the measures passed for their repression were unjust and cruel as well as ineffectual; but it is to be remembered that in their half-insane enthusiasm they were guilty of startling antics.

More or less of intolerance was manifested in all the colonies of New England, among the Dutch in New Netherlands, in Virginia among the Episcopalians, and in Maryland where the Catholics predominated. But there was one colony, destined to become the Key-Stone State, where tolerance prevailed. The Quaker William Penn having obtained a large grant of land in 1681 from Charles II. came to this country seeking to provide an asylum for persecuted Christians of his own faith. He gave freedom and equality of rights in all matters of religion to all people; while by his fair dealing with the Indians he laid the foundation for a peace which was never marred by an outrage against the savages, nor by a single outbreak on their part.

Theology has been working itself out, but not to final conclusions. Indeed that can never be on earth, yet, comparatively speaking, we have reached completeness and balance of doctrines. These good results have been attained by the operation of forces

acting together from opposite directions upon the same object. Contributions to truth have been made by Calvinism and Arminianism, by advocates of Inability and Natural Ability, by adherents of the Governmental and the Moral theories of the atonement; by Natural Theology and Revealed Religion, and by lovers of simplicity and of elaboration in forms of worship.

We have conserved the elements of truth in mysticism, pantheism and humanitarianism, and have incorporated them all into general thought. The same is true of whatever was best in the reaction toward Unitarianism and Universalism from too severe dogmatism. Much yet remains to be gained in the way of penetration and comprehension, and much toward the perfecting of Christian charity and liberality, but we are now in the way that leads to the attainment of these things.

The twentieth century inherits a controversy concerning the value of historical criticism in the study of the structure of the Bible. Many are content to accept the written word according to the traditional views, magnifying the work of inspiration in shaping every part of it and deprecating as de-

structive every attempt to analyze its contents with a view to determining its personal and local characteristics. Many who devote themselves to this study are both profound in scholarship and reverence, and sincerely believe that the book will open itself to men more richly and helpfully as it is better understood, both on the human and the divine side.

So far as practical reforms are concerned changes of immeasurable import have come about, sometimes by convulsion, more often by orderly evolution. The total effect of these changes has been such a modification of society as to make within the circle of the most highly civilized lands, a new world. Slavery has been forever abolished from Christendom. This institution, although hoary with antiquity, is so illogical and inhuman, that being once free from it we stand aghast at its enormity. It was too deeply rooted in the sentiments and customs of the race to be wholly extirpated by the Mosaic legislation which was compelled to content itself with the restriction and important modification of existing wrongs. Christianity found it no longer in vogue among the people of Israel, but, strongly entrenched everywhere else throughout the Roman Em-

pire. To have attempted its abolition by an authoritative fiat would have been a foolhardy act. Every principle of Christ's own life and teaching was adverse to this iniquitous institution but, as in the case of so many flagrant wrongs, lying within the province of the state, He waited with divine patience for its overthrow by a process of education and reform. By the middle of the eighteenth century the English people began to awaken to a sense of its moral enormity, and individuals were not wanting with convictions and the courage of utterance. The nineteenth century was, nevertheless, on the wane before a great convulsion brought the system to a perpetual end in the English-speaking world. Since the banishment of this evil from our own country the emancipation of bondmen and serfs has followed in Russia and Brazil, and now the inhuman custom hides itself within the bounds of the darkest continents.

The duel, an evil of smaller proportions and yet almost as manifestly unchristian, is dying a lingering death. A false code of social honor prevailed for a long period binding one who was challenged to mortal combat to accept the issue, and compelling men to resent even a fancied insult by a

challenge. Not only have lives of great value to the world been sacrificed on this Moloch, but the very framework of society itself has been disturbed, and the moral sentiments have been perverted. This custom at length has been generally abolished, partly by legislation and partly by the increase of enlightenment.

The struggle for the suppression of lotteries of both open and obscure forms is still in progress. Ground for encouragement is found in the fact that the evil character of all ventures by which money is gained without due compensation in productive labor has been set forth alike in the general judgment of men, and in the legislative action of nearly every civilized government.

Perhaps the same declaration ought to be made regarding the evil of intemperance. The century opens with the saloon still firmly established. But the wrongs inflicted by this institution upon individuals and the peril which it brings to society have been made so conspicuous, and such ceaseless warfare is being waged against it by legislation and by the best influences of the day, that the final issue cannot be doubtful.

As to public morals, immense gain has been made in the creation of a sentiment as

wide as Christendom against drunkenness, and immorality of every kind. One has to go back but few decades to encounter a prevailing concession to the personal habits of men of eminence in government and society. It was held that the public could rightfully concern itself only with conduct that directly violated the obligations of public service. To-day evil living is not merely accounted a disgrace for a man in high position, but is rapidly becoming a bar to such offices as lie within the range of popular suffrage. There have also been great improvements in the morals of the community. The tokens of advance in the good order of cities can only be appreciated by recalling periods of disorder from which the civilized world has escaped. Within the limits of a lifetime the night has been a cover for deeds of shame and violence. Many influences have combined to banish crimes that once entrenched themselves in the purlieus of every metropolis. Night no longer protects criminals. The flash of the electric light opens every alley to inspection. There is a better and ever-improving system of police patrol, while by the uplift of the masses the majority of men have become home-keeping and orderly.

No student of our times can imagine for a moment that the work of reform is finished. Evil still exists and wrongs against individuals and classes are still perpetrated. Social science is still crude and the "labor movement" is still in its infancy. But, on the other hand, he would be dull or ungrateful who did not thankfully acknowledge the advancement of human society in all things that touch the mental, moral and physical welfare of mankind. Whereas, once the great mass of the people were beneath the level of sufficiency and decency, the vast majority are now living in comfort and hope; and whereas once there prevailed ignorance and superstition darkening the lives of the many, we now mark the small percentage of the illiterate, and smile at superstitions which were once cruelly regnant.

It is not enough to note the changes which have been wrought in the way of the modification of laws and customs which condition society; it is necessary, also, to take into account the ideas which have become implanted in the minds of men, and which, by the highest law of development, are bound to germinate.

In religion, the idea of the fatherhood of

God is governing the minds of men. Some are still struggling with a different notion of deity, transmitted from gloomier ages when men were bred to the notion of monarchy and absolutism in both state and church. But it is safe to say that religious thinking must now be based on this fundamental truth, that God by the inmost law of his being and in his relation to those who have life from him, is an everlasting Father.

Out of this basic truth has at last sprung the conception of the common brotherhood of the race. The phrase "universal brotherhood," is becoming a truism and the idea is rooting itself in Christian consciousness. From this arises, of necessity, not only a wider philanthropy and a more genuine sympathy, but a sense of the inherent dignity and worth of the meanest individual. There is being recognized a potency for good in every child in God's great family. With this better appreciation of the individual there is rapidly developing an idea of the common good, and the regnancy of social motives. Because every human unit is of dignity and value, society, which is the organization into the unity of public life of the aggregate of human units, is of supreme worth, and whatever practice or pursuit

militates against the general interests of society must therefore stand condemned.

Thus has come about the gradual annihilation of another notion which has held place for centuries, and has wrought much wrong. There is now no "divine right of kings,"—except the right to be noble, and to do service for humanity according to the opportunities of life,—and that is the divine right of every man. All government is for the people; and for the highest good of all the people. Public office is a public trust.

Among the other results of a truer sense of the Divine Character and of individual worth is to be reckoned a new sensibility to human pain. Up to the most recent times, men have been phenomenally indifferent to the suffering of their fellow men. They did not put themselves in the place of the unfortunate and the wretched, and their sympathies were untouched. The idea that suffering and want must be as far as possible avoided or alleviated, now rules throughout the civilized world. There is an aversion to cruelty in both its positive and negative forms. The days of physical torture have forever gone by; they have, indeed, become one of the incredible records of history. Prison reform is a hundred years old, and

still the good work goes on. The dirt and disease, the shame and cruelty which John Howard and Elizabeth Fry found in every prison of Europe have been largely banished, and the whole trend of penal science is not only toward cleanliness and health, but also toward the recovery of manhood and citizenship. Sensibility to human suffering has developed into a positive enthusiasm for humanity; as is evinced in the most varied and intense efforts to relieve and uplift men. The philanthropic schemes of the day are numberless, and embrace both the temporal comfort and the higher welfare of all classes and conditions of men.

But all the gain has not been merely on the side of the unfortunate; the idea of the wholesomeness of life prevails, to the advantage of the most favored. This is in striking contrast with sad blunders made by ascetics of earlier days, cramping and warping human life, not only by forcing men to adopt a distinctive career of poverty and privation in monasteries, but robbing all who aimed at the cultivation of piety of the natural buoyancy and freedom of living. Now, all of life is seen to be beautiful, noble and ennobling if the heart be only pure and

kind and the face uplifted in trust and aspiration toward God.

The process of redemption still goes on. Wide reaches are yet to be covered, for there are wrongs to be righted and gains to be made. Inequalities of property and privilege breed discontent. Problems as intricate and difficult as any in the past must be solved before social order reaches perfection and finality. But, while many endure hardship and some are disheartened, the noblest are sharing Victor Hugo's "irrepressible ardor to ameliorate the lot of all who suffer." Sin and sorrow still abound, but there is a force in the world of inexhaustible energy and persistence which works toward social regeneration. Christianity has established itself. It is the ultimate religion and to the end will furnish the loftiest ideals for the individual and for society. Fulfilling its heaven-appointed mission, it is ever adapting itself to the circumstances of men under changing social conditions. At every stage of advancement, from the lowest to the highest, it will be found true of it, as Goethe, in one of his conversations with Eckermann, said: "Let mental culture continually increase, let the natural sciences grow, broadening and deep-

ening in their progress, let the human mind expand as it will,—beyond the elevation and moral culture of Christianity, as it gleams and shines forth in the Gospels, men will never advance.”

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